

Fundamentals of Islam

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**Fundamentals Of Islam According To
The Qur'an As Presented By
Muhammad (S) And Aale Muhammad
(‘A) -Mirza Mahdi Pooya**

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Sub Title:

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Fundamentals of Islam

According to the 'Qur'an as Presented by Muhammad (S) and Aale Muhammad ('a)

In this text, the author describes the key elements of faith according to the teachings of the Shi'a Ithna Ash'ari school of thought. He proceeds to explain certain aspects of the faith, whereby the principles differ from other Islamic schools of thought.

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Foreword

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

When was busy for the second time writing *Introduction to the Holy Qur'an* translated by my friend, Mr. Mir Ahmed Ali, the Late Mr. Mohammad Ali Khurasani, an internal auditor of P.IA., suggested to me that I dictate to him a brief outline of the fundamentals of Islam according to the Shi'a faith. Every now and then, whenever he had the opportunity, he took dictation from me.

Hardly had we finished the work, God deprived me of this sincere and zealous friend whose ambition was to introduce the teachings of the Shi'a school of thought in the English language. The religious zeal of Mr. Khurasani was not confined to him alone, his wife equally shared his love and devotion for the

propagation of truth.

The mutual zeal of both husband and wife in achieving this holy aim was an important asset for our mission. Unfortunately, for some time, the shock of her husband's death brought the work to a standstill. However, the whole work is the result of initiation of the interest of the husband and wife, and I have no option but to dedicate this work to them and pray to God to bless them both for the services rendered by them for this cause.

Here I need to mention another friend of mine, Mr. Syed Mohammad Murtaza who has been assisting me ever since my undertaking to produce a new introduction to the Qur'an. Besides noting down my dictation, he has translated into Urdu this treatise, which is the first part of my religious work. I thank him for his sincere devotion, which was an encouragement for me to carry out the work, despite my indisposition.

I request my readers to go through this work with critical insight and inform me of any shortcoming whatsoever.

I must also thank my young typist, Mr. Mushtaq Ali. K. Laddhani, who performed his duties devotedly like the other members of our team for this holy cause. His services were placed with me by Messrs. Habib Esmail Benevolent Trust. The Trust is entirely responsible for this publication and is also well-known for its constant publication of religious literature, enlightening the faithful and others. The manifold services of this benevolent Trust in the propagation of the teachings of *Ahl Al-Bayt* need no introduction. As such, I have nothing to say but pray to God to bless them and all those philanthropists who are serving the sacred cause of Islam.

To me, the best rewards that devotees of Muhammad and *Aali Muhammad* (peace be on them) are enjoying now and shall continue to enjoy forever is the love of Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) and the infallible members of his house.

I am indebted to Pakistan Herald Press (Job Section) for their close cooperation during the printing of this work.

Let me conclude with the couplet of Sa'adi:

سعدی اگر عاشقی کنی و جوانی

عشق محمد کیس است و آل محمد

Sa'adi, if you wish to enjoy the pleasures of love and evergreen blossom of life,

it is enough to absorb the love of Muhammad and Aali Muhammad.

No reward and pleasure of this life and hereafter are greater than this sublime and sacred love.

Haji Mirza Mehdi Pooya

Karachi - Pakistan

August 1971.

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SHARES

Self-Evident Terms And Propositions

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

“Verily the religion with God is Islam (submission to God’s will); and those whom the book had been given did not differ, but after the Knowledge (of the truth) had come unto them, out of envy among themselves; and whosoever disbelieveth in the signs of God: then, verily, God is quick in reckoning.” (3: 19)

Deen (religion) is a term used in several meanings, which are not totally irrelevant from each other; one is a figurative expression of the other. Here, the term strictly means submissive attitude of human conscience towards some ‘sacred object’. The sacred object means a superhuman controlling power whose pleasure and displeasure are responsible for happiness and sufferings of man.

Hardly can anyone claim to be without religion in this sense. Thus, the history of religion and its development are the same as the history of the development of human consciousness. Of the various religions in their highly developed form, the religion of Islam is usually classed among the latest. But as it is presented in the Qur’an and defined in this treatise, the reader will find it the oldest or rather the only religion, the development of which is correlated with the development of human consciousness.

In other word, as the Qur’an says, it is the only faith with which human consciousness is born. The variety of religions is nothing but the outcome of the rebellious nature of power-seekers or other selfish

motives. The main source of Islam is the Holy Qur'an, which is known to all. The Qur'an postulates the existence of Superhuman Power or Person as the Creator and Controller of the whole universe, of which man with his conscience and volition is part of.

Thus, the Qur'an says that religion is a submissive attitude of human conscience towards that Almighty Power. It is the only religion approved by the Almighty – the Ultimate Power or person. To Him, every finite thing or being has willingly or unwillingly submitted. No salvation can be secured by any being but through submission to Him. All schools of thought in Islam are unanimous in this definition of Islam. The differences between them concern only with the details of this 'submissive attitude'.

The purpose of this work is to present before the readers a brief outline of the fundamentals of Islam as advocated by the *Shi'a Ithna Ash'ari* school, which is one of the oldest schools of thought in Islam. To achieve this purpose, it is essential to acquaint the readers with knowledge of the following 'self-evident' terms and propositions.

The Principle Of Cause And Effect

No one with common sense and average intelligence can ever doubt the existence of God. One may as well deny his own existence in some sense or the other, rather than denying or even doubting an 'effect' being without any cause.

The thing or being by which another thing or being exists or on which the existence of another thing or being depends, is called a 'cause'.

The thing or being which depends on or owes its existence to something else is called an 'effect' or an event or phenomenon.

The existence of an effect cannot depend on a non-being or nothing or nothingness. This would imply that the chain of an effect and its cause ends in a 'self-existing' cause. Otherwise, it would mean the existence of a being or a thing by a non-being, or naught and the absurdity of this is self-evident.

Having the definition or the cause and effect in view, mankind has been questioned by the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ

“Or were they created by nothing? Or are they themselves the creators?” (52:35)

أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَلْ لَا يُوقِنُونَ

“Or created they the heavens and the earth? Nay, they have no certainty”. (52:36)

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمُ الْمُصَيِّرُونَ

“Or do they own the treasures of thy Lord? Or have they been given charge (thereof)?” (52:36)

Various Types Of Causes

The basis of all scientific investigations is that there can be no effect without a cause. The word ‘cause’ is a term meaning a thing somehow responsible for the existence of a being or another thing; and it comprises two types, the ‘structural’ and ‘creative’.

The structural causes are the parts and the components of the effect.

The Creative or Agential causes are the originating factors or those producing the structure, bringing it into existence. But they are not part of the structure.

The structural cause is further subdivided into two categories, ‘material’ and ‘formal’. The material cause is the thing out of which the structure is made. The formal cause is the shape or the form by which the structure becomes what it is.

The creative cause means the factor that produces the parts and affects their arrangement. This cause consists of two types, ‘genetic’¹ and ‘objective’. The former is called the First or the Active, and the latter is called the Ultimate or Final Cause (purpose or motive).

No man, with common sense, has ever denied or doubted the necessity of the Structural cause. Everything owes its existence to its component parts and to the ‘form’ in which they are arranged together.

Everything Is An Effect

Each thing or being of composite nature is an Effect, i.e., its existence is not by itself, as it depends at least on its parts and its existence is caused by them. The parts of a being or beings cannot be non-beings. The question arises whether the parts exist by themselves, or they are themselves also composite wholes and in turn depend on their parts?

If they are also composed of parts, then we will have to trace back the process till we reach the final components. That will lead to the conclusion that they are beings of non-composite nature, existing by themselves, on which the whole edifice of the effects and their causes stand. But no being of a dimensional nature and presentable in space and time, can ever be of a non-composite nature, as the simplest and the smallest being which occupies space is dimensional and geometrically divisible and depends on its part.

Therefore, no dimensional being can be taken as a self-existing being and thus be considered as the 'first or the beginning' in the chain of beings. Either we accept that the chain is based on non-beings (and the absurdity of this is self-evident) or we are forced to step out of the realm of the material chain in the search of a non-composite, non-dimensional self-existing 'Being' and assert that the chain of cause and effect is based on this 'Being'.

This means that the whole dimensional realm presentable in the terms of space and time is an effect and the phenomenon of a Non-dimensional and Non-physical being. On this ground we will have to leave the dimensional realm and proceed in search of the self-existing being responsible for the phenomenon of the chain of cause and effect in the realm where the experimental logic and method has no approach to it at all.²

The Concrete And The Abstract Part

We have said that any being that is of composite nature depends for its existence on its parts, and hence it is an effect, a phenomenon and unreal. It is to be pointed out here that the parts and the components of a composite being may be of two types, Concrete and Abstract.

The Concrete

The concrete parts are those which our mind observes side by side in the realm outside the mind, such as the parts of an organic, chemical or geometrical compound.

The Abstract

The 'abstract' parts are those found in a being in the course of the mental process and analysis, but outside the realm of the mind, the parts are merged into each other as one entity such as the logical parts of a 'definition', *Genus* and *Differentia*. *Genus*, being the aspect found in an idea which is common in other ideas too, and *Differentia* being the aspect that is peculiar to one and is not found in another.

In any case, composition means dependence on the parts. Hence, the composite being becomes an effect and a phenomenon and is thus unreal, irrespective of whether the parts are concrete or abstract because although the abstract parts – *Genus* and *Differentia* – are merged into each other as one outside the mind, in fact they are two different things.

Therefore, the same would be the case of beings dependent on abstract parts in logical definition. They are also effects, phenomena, unreal and non-self-existing being.

Absolute Oneness Of The Self-Existing Being

As we had to step out of the limitation of space and time in search of the self-existing Being, we have also to step further out beyond the logical limitations which consists of the abstract parts of *Genus* and *Differentia*.

Hence, the self-existing being must be unlimited and could not be described in terms of space and time, *Genus* and *Differentia*. It should be beyond all dimensional and non-dimensional limitations and as such it cannot be but one; because the idea of the two self-existing beings implies limitations of both, having a common aspect or being self-existent and the aspect by which they are distinguished from each other; hence composite and dependent on their parts.

The conclusion is that the self-existing being is one, the real entity that is not divisible at all, in any sense of the term, and in any respect or form or any aspect imaginable. Therefore, it is the real unique entity, the like of which is in not possible in any sense.

Self-Consciousness Of The Self-Existing One

This unique entity by which finite beings – in part and as whole, exist – is not absent from 'Itself'. Hence, it is conscious of 'Itself'. Consciousness means the presence of the Known to the Knower, the presence of one thing to (or for) another.

If the entity or being is present to 'Itself' then the being is conscious of 'Itself' and consequently becomes conscious of everything else that is present before it or stand by it. But if the being (or the entity) is absent from 'Itself', it cannot be self-conscious, and hence, unconscious of other things surrounding.

Non-Consciousness Of Dimensional Beings Or Entities:

All dimensional beings are composed of dimensional parts, and every dimensional part occupies a portion of space not identified with the portion occupied by the other parts. Hence, every dimensional part is absent from the other dimensional parts. The conclusion is that all dimensional beings are devoid of self-consciousness and consequently devoid of consciousness.

On the other hand, any entity or being that is non-dimensional and non-material, be it composed of abstract parts such as finite mind (which is composed of *Genus* and *Differentia*) or not composed of any parts at all such as the Absolute entity in question (who is unlimited and infinite) is not absent from itself either because it has no part at all or because it consists of parts which do not occupy different portions of space. The parts are merged into each other, and their separation is only a mental and conceptual process.

Regarding the non-dimensional Being or the Absolute Entity, it is obvious that 'It' cannot be absent from 'Itself' on account of its absolute oneness. Though the non-dimensional beings which are finite consist of parts and are hence dependent, the parts are one and identical outside the mind and the realm conception. Hence, they are also not absent from their own selves. Each is present to itself, hence conscious of itself, and consequently conscious of whatever is present before It.

The conclusion is that whatever is non-dimensional is conscious, and whatever is conscious is non-dimensional. Therefore, the Absolute Entity, by which all beings exist and stand, is necessarily present

with every being, as its holding or sustaining factor is self-conscious and conscious of all that exist by it, hence Living (الحي القيوم). Therefore, the reference to the Absolute entity responsible for the whole phenomenon called 'universe', should be in terms of 'He' instead of 'it'.

In light of the above statement one can realize that the personal pronoun 'He' (*Huwa* هو) refers to a well-known Person, and it has no real application but to the Absolute One and no term or word can be taken as a real reference to the Absolute One but this personal pronoun 'He'. Therefore, there is no real 'He' but the Absolute One, there is no real term for Him but 'He'. This idea of '*Huwwiyat*' – ('He-ness' هويات), in its true significance, is given in Sura Al-Ikhlās (Chapter 112).

The fundamental articles of faith as given by this school of thought are no other than the various aspects implied in the ideas of *Huwwiyat* i.e. Absolute Oneness of the 'self-existing being'. Therefore, without the knowledge of these articles, the submissive attitude of human consciousness towards that Sacred Entity would be imperfect. These fundamental articles of faith are:

1. Belief in the Unity or Absolute Oneness of the Real Sacred Entity (Allah-God).
2. Belief in His justice as the total of all His analytical attributes and excellences.
3. Belief in the necessity of *Nubuwwah* (Prophethood) and
4. *Imamah* (the divine vicegerency).
5. Belief in *Qiyamah* (the resurrection) and final purpose of creation.

[1](#). Relating to the origin [Note by al-Islam.org].

[2](#). Therefore, in other words, no being of dimensional nature can be taken as the first and the fundamental unit in the chain of the structural causes of the effect. We need to postulate that either the chain of the beings in question is based on non-beings or nothingness (and the absurdity of this is self-evident) or we are forced by reason to search for a being of non-composite form, somewhere beyond the realm of matter and dimension. Thus, we will have to step in the sphere of non-material and non-dimensional beings.

It means that in the chain of the structural causes of the dimensional phenomena, there is nothing to be termed as self-existent. Therefore, neither the structure of the dimensional universe nor its structural causes – its material and formal components – are self-existent. They owe their existence to some creative or producing factor of non-material and non-dimensional nature, which is not part and parcel of the structure, but has a hold over the structure and its material and formal causes.

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Oneness Of God – Tawhid

Belief In The Absolute Oneness Of God

Unity means belief in the absolute Oneness of God, in the sense that He is not composite and divisible in any sense or composition and divisibility. It implies negation of all limitations because limitation in any sense implies composition, and a composite being is not self-existent. A self-existent, unlimited being is not definable. So, any attempt to conceive Him by any external or internal means of our limited power or understanding is futile.

But He is recognizable by any being, in the sense that every limited being can realize His existence, and Essence as manifested in His Attributes. His Attributes can be presented in two ways – affirmative (*Subutia*) and negated (*Salabia*). All His Affirmative Attributes refer to the assertion of His Absolute Unity. All His Negative Attributes refer to the negation of limitation and composition. Thus, they are reducible to negation of limitation and composition

For beginners, the negated attributes can be defined as follows. He cannot be described in any physical or anthropomorphic terms. He does not consist of body, colour and size. It is not possible for any creature to see or sight Him, or even to imagine and conceive Him. He is not to be presented in terms of substance or contingent, matter or form. It is not possible to localize Him in any part or space or confine Him to any stretch or point in time. He is not to be aligned and counted with any being.

Although as the Creator He is with everything, nothing co-existed or is an extension of Him. All these negations mean the negation of limitation and composition.

His Affirmative Attributes are of three types:

1. The essential attributes or the real attributes of the Essence (*Sifat Adh-Dhat: Sifat al-Haqiqiyyah*).
2. The essential relative attributes (*Sifat al-Haqiqiyyah al-Izafiya*).
3. The relative attributes (*Sifat al-Izafiyah*).

1. The Essential Attributes Or The Real Attributes Of The Essence

The essential attributes or the real attributes of the Essence mean such ideas which are implied in the very idea or Unity of Essence and are identical with it and are not in relation to anything else. These are:

- (i) Oneness,
- (ii) Self existence,

(iii) Self Consciousness,

(iv) Self Love and

(v) Life.[1](#)

The above qualities are attributed to Him – the Godhead, Allah, in consideration of His Essence only. The subject and object of each of these attributes are identical in as much as there is no difference among the knower, knowing and the known, or the lover, loving and the beloved and so forth.

2. The Essential Relative Attributes

The Essential Relative Attributes mean such ideas which are said about Him but in consideration of His relation to the entities other than Himself. These are:

(i) Knowledge of entities other than Himself

(ii) Will – the love for expression and manifestation

(iii) Love of entities other than Himself and

(iv) Might – or His hold over entities other than Himself.

In the popular preliminary treatise on the fundamental articles of faith (*Usool Ad-Din*), Hearing and Seeing are counted as “His Relative Real Attributes”. Besides these two, Speech is also counted as one of His Relative Real Attributes by some schools of thought in Islam. So far as the first two above-mentioned attributes are concerned, they are Real Relative attributes. But they are not separate attributes other than His knowledge of the object.

Everything is known to Him, be it the qualitative or quantitative, substance or contingent, big or small, visible or unseen, physical or intangible. He is Omniscient; everything is present to Him, be it the object of hearing or seeing, taste, smell or touch or of any other senses, external or internal. The reason for counting Hearing and Seeing among His attributes as it is mentioned in the Qur'an is just to emphasize that the objects of the two are also present to Him, like the objects of all other senses.

Regarding the last one, Speech, if it means the Might and Power and Ability to speak, it refers to His two main Attributes Knowledge and Might. As such, it is not a separate attribute besides Knowledge and Might. If it means the process of speech or origination of audible and intelligent words, then it cannot be classified as one of His attributes.

It is one of His acts of creation, and as such His words and speech are created by Him like other created things. The origin of the idea of counting Speech among His attributes and considering it as uncreated as other attributes, is to be traced back to the ancient theory of Logos, which was formulated by the

Alexandrian Jewish school of thought. The same theory was later adopted by the Christian theologians as the Word of God identified with Him and as the Uncreated Second Person in the Trinity of Godhead.

According to the Qur'an everything or being is an outcome of Divine will, attention or intention, which is termed in the Qur'an as Command of God, 'kun fayakun' (كُنْ فَيَكُونُ) "Be, and it is!"². In this sense, whatever is manifested in any sphere or realm of creation, administration and legislation, is the word of God that is an outcome of His Imperative Will.

In some way or other, every word of God represents His Will and is a manifestation of His attributes. As such, the Qur'an counts Jesus as one of His created words in the realm of creation, and the Qur'an itself, *Taurah* or the other scriptures, as His words in the realm of legislation. The Qur'an says that the words of God are innumerable in either realm. Therefore, these cannot be accounted for by limited powers.³

وَلَوْ أَنَّ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَامٌ وَالْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَا نَفِدَتْ كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

“And if the trees on earth be pens and seven more seas are added to the sea (as ink), “yet” the words of God will not be exhausted.” (31:27)

But the words of God, though all are created and are a manifestation of His Will, differ from each other in comprehensiveness. The more comprehensive the word, the Higher it will be in its representative status and closer to God in the hierarchy of beings from the primal matter up to the highest spiritual entities.

On this basis, the most perfect created word of God in the realm of creation is the last prophet, and the book (the Qur'an) with which he was sent is the most perfect word of God in the realm of legislation

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

“And perfect has become the word of thy Lord in truth and justice; There is none to change His words, and He is the All-Hearing and the All-Knowing.” (6: 115)

However, it should be borne in mind that as Ali ('a) says, “The word of God in any realm is His work, therefore, it is created”, be it Christ or Muhammad or the Qur'an or anything else.

The above qualities are attributed to Him in consideration of His Essence, in a relative sense, in as much as the object is other than the subject. Both types of attributes shown above are the analytical attributes inherent in the very idea of Absolute unity or the Infinite (Godhead).

3. The Relative Attributes

The relative attributes of God are innumerable, such as Creator, Sustainer, Forgiver, Ruler, Helper and so forth. Any adjectival idea about Him in relation to some aspect of his action is the relative attribute.

The number of relative attributes is known to Him alone. The Qur'an says:

قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ

“Call Him, Allah or ar-Rahman (AllGracious) whether call Him this or that makes no difference; behold that He has innumerable excellent names⁴” (17: 110)

For a more detailed list of His excellent names, one can refer to the famous supplication *Du'a al-Jawshan al-Kabeer*. These are attributed to Him in consideration of His actions or in consideration of His relation to His creatures, or to what He has been doing and will continue to do.

The third type of His attributes are drawn from, or are the result of the second type, the Essential relative attributes. Again, the second type of attributes are derived from the first type, the essential attributes. Finally, His Essence is beyond any limitation, definition and comprehension. These are all that a finite being in his utmost effort can say about Him – the 'Allah'.

'Allah' is the only great name for His 'essence and existence' which is but 'All-Excellence'. A creature cannot conceive beyond this. According to the interpretation by the purified imams of the house of Holy Prophet, no creature, with all his endowed excellences, can refer to His essence but with the word 'Huwa' (He). 'Huwa' is the first word after word 'Qul' (say! Oh, apostle) in *surah 112*⁵. 'Allah' is beyond our conception; even our subtle conception of the 'Infinite He' represents nothing but the limitations of the finite 'we'.

This concept of the 'absolute oneness' and infiniteness of the essence and attributes of Godhead presents 'Him' as the unique in oneness or the Unique Entity in the true sense of these two terms – to Whom all finite beings owe their existence, qualities, and all excellences they possess. The concept leaves no room for imagining anything as second or opposed to Him or to match with Him, because any such idea would mean limitation affecting His Absoluteness and consequently making Him of composite nature, finite and dependent on His components.

The concept eliminates all possibilities of anything emanating from Him, as the very idea of emanation means divisibility, contradicting His Absoluteness. He did not 'beget nor is He begotten'; hence the idea of Fatherhood and Sonship has no place in this concept of Godhead.

All finite beings are His creatures, dependent – in their very existence – on His Will. The word 'Qayyum' (القيوم) expresses one of His attributes that He is self-sustaining, and everything is sustained by Him.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ تَقُومَ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً مِنَ الْأَرْضِ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ تَخْرُجُونَ

“And of His signs is that the heavens and the earth stand firm by His command; then when He summoneth you with a (single) summon from out of the earth, lo; you come forth.” (30:25)

Being Absolute and Infinite, no finite being or thing – with all their limitations – can be considered as His incarnation and His complete manifestation because the finite beings – even as a whole – are, after all, finite, while He is Infinite.

Therefore, there is no room for deification of any being in any form, whether man as the microcosm, or the whole Universe as a macro-man. It is quite true that creatures represent His attributes, and that the representation varies according to the stages of perfection. But even the foremost in perfection is limited and submissive to the infinite One.

The highest and the most accomplished creature is nothing but His servant and slave, within His complete hold a hold in its true meaning of Power. No polytheism, no trinity or dualism, no incarnation or anthropomorphism have any place in this concept of the ‘Oneness of God-head – Allah’.

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

“Nothing is like of Him.” (112:4).

فَاطِرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُّكُمْ فِيهِ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

“The Creator of the heaven and the earth. He hath made for you pairs of yourselves, and of the cattle also pairs, whereby He multiplieth you. Nothing is like of Him, and He is the Hearer, the seer.” (42: 11)

The justification for man or any other created and finite being for naming and describing God with Excellent Attributes is that when man and other beings find some excellences in themselves, they feel that the same attributes in its highest order should exist in the Creator. For example, man found life in his 'self' and felt that something corresponding to this 'life' in its highest order, must be existent with his 'Self'.

This applies to all other excellences that we may find here in our 'self' and in 'beings' surrounding us. We are thus obliged to feel that these excellences and beatitudes are also present in the infinite Absolute in such a limitless degree that befits His Absolute Oneness and Infiniteness.

Beyond this point, 'why' and 'wherefore' do not prevail; and here definition and description fail. But love for the realization and assimilation and reflection of His attributes is ever-increasing and surges on. This leads man to a deeper and yet deeper submission to His Will and the desire for coming in communion

with Him.

Finally, a man approaching Him in this submissive way will absorb his own will in 'His'. The result is the rise of man from the limitations of the temporal life – which is the cause of the demoralization of the human soul – to the horizon, from where he sees and realizes the whole Universe as the Kingdom of God and manifestation of His universal Love and Grace.

Ultimately, the will of such person becomes His will, his order becomes His order, his actions become His action. He takes no course in his life and activities but whatever is revealed to him by Him.

The following verses of the Qur'an should be borne in mind.

وَالضُّحَىٰ

“(Oh, Our Apostle Muhammad!) By the Noonday (Brightness).” (93: 1)

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ

“By the night when it darkeneth.” (93:2)

مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ

“Hath forsaken not thee thy Lord, nor hath he been displeased (with thee).” (93:3)

وَلِلْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ

“And Verily, the end is better for thee than the beginning (of life)” (93:4)

الرَّحْمٰنُ

“The Beneficent.” (55: 1)

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

“Taught He the Qur'an.” (55:2)

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ

“He created man,” (55:3)

عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

“He taught him expression.” (55:4)

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ

“(He) who taught (to write) with the pen” (96:4)

عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

“He taught man what he knew not!” (96:5)

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا

“Whoso obeyeth the Apostle, he indeed obeyeth God;” (4:80)

إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ

“... I follow not but what is revealed unto me...” (6:50)

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Say: verily my prayer and my sacrifice, my life, and my death, (are all, only) for God, the Lord of the worlds” (6: 162)

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

“No associate (is there) for Him; and this I am commanded, and of Muslims I am the first (i.e. those who submit to God).” (6: 163)

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَتَّبِعُ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ مِنْ رَبِّي

“... Verily, I only follow what is revealed unto me from my Lord ...” (7:203)

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“So ye slew them not, but God slew them, and thou threw not (the dust) but God threw it, that he might test the believers by a gracious trial from Him; Verily God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.” (8:17)

إِن أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ

“...I follow not but what is revealed unto me...” (10:15)

إِن أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

“... I follow naught save what hath been revealed unto me, and I am not but an open warner.” (46:9)

لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

“That ye may believe in God and His apostle and may aid and revere him; and that ye may celebrate His Glory, morning and evening.” (48:9)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ

“Verily, those who swear their fealty unto thee do but swear fealty unto God ...” (48:10)

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

“Indeed, sent We Our apostles with clear proofs, and sent We down with them the Book and the Scale that people may establish themselves in justice; and sent We down iron wherein is latent (in its use) mighty power and also benefits for mankind and that God may bring into evidence the one who helpeth Him and His apostles in unseen way; Verily God is All-Strong the Ever-

Prevalent.” (57:25)

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ

“By the star tending up and down;” (53: 1)

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ

“Erreth not your companion (Our Apostle Muhammad) nor is he led astray;” (53:2)

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ

“And, nor he speaketh of (his own) inclination; It (the wording) is naught, but a revelation revealed (unto him).” (53:3)

إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ

“Taught him the one intense in power.” (53:4)

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

“Thou art endowed with (sublime) great character.” (68:4)

[1.](#) Here, life should not be taken as what is found in plant, animal and man. Life, here, means the total of the abovementioned attributes in (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv).

[2.](#) This is a phrase that occurs several times in the Holy Qur’an: 2:117; 3:47; 3:59; 6:73; 16:40; 19:35; 36:82; 40:68. [Note by Al-Islam.org].

[3.](#) Reference to the Holy Qur’an, 20:27.

[4.](#) in adjectival sense.

[5.](#) Sura at-Tawhid.

[1] [1]

SHARES

'Adalah – Justice

Belief In The Justice Of God

This is the belief in the truism that the 'self-consciousness' in the Essence of Godhead manifests in His Essence of 'self-love', which again manifests in the love for 'self-expression'. The love for self-expression means 'the will to act'. Being Absolute, identified with all excellence and perfection, 'He' has the means for self-expression within 'Himself: this is the might or power.

The will (love for self-expression) means creation. Hence, creation is the manifestation of 'His' love and might. Thus, the purpose of action is self-expression. Therefore, it necessarily is in complete accord and harmony with the purpose. This harmonious arrangement and accordant synchronization of 'His' action with His power is His justice. It is the positioning of everything in its precise point in order to create unity through harmony and to achieve the purpose. Hence, justice is the necessary qualification of 'His' action. That is to say that His action and justice are inseparable.

His 'action', or 'creation', being the outcome of love, is the manifestation of 'His' grace but not with the expectation of any return for 'Himself'. Therefore, 'His' grace pervades the realm of creation, which is presented in the term 'all-pervading grace'. But each creature receives of 'His' grace as much as its capacity allows it to.

This is termed as "His specific and particular grace" as the specific grant of grace is in accordance with the capacity or merit of the 'recipient'. This is called justice. Therefore, here again, His grace and justice are inseparable.

Whatever 'He' grants, 'He' grants out of pure love, with no expectation of any return for it. Hence, 'His' grace is grace in its true sense, and as He grants precisely in accordance with the merit or capacity of the recipient – nothing more and nothing less – this is Justice. Taking Considering both these aspects, grace and justice as inseparable principles of 'His' action, His attribute of 'cherishing' (for this is the nearest English language equivalent for '*Rububiyyah*') is manifested and "He" is frequently mentioned in the Qur'an as the 'Lord Cherisher of the Worlds'.

Of His relative attributes, grace and justice as presented above are two principles, one manifested by the other. Grace implies justice, and justice implies grace. They in turn are manifestations of His relative real attributes, which are the manifestations of His real attributes, and the very idea of oneness implies them in all.

Thus, justice is the most comprehensive attribute of God through which all His attributes are manifested, as it has been emphasized upon as a fundamental principle of faith, next to the belief in His oneness. The same comprehensive excellence, Justice, has been made the ultimate object of human life. It is for

the achievement of this Godly excellence that God has established His vicegerency on earth and continued to commission prophets after prophets and accompanied them with Books and Wisdom, i.e. Balancing Power.

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

“Indeed, sent We our apostles with clear proofs, and sent We down with them the Book and the Scale that people may establish themselves in justice; and sent We down Iron wherein is latent (in its use) mighty power and also benefits for mankind and that God may prove who helpeth Him and His apostles in secret: Verily God is All-Strong the Ever-Prevalent” (57:25)

Justice and injustice are presented in the Qur'an in various other verses as the principal standards by which human virtues and vices are to be judged by God and man himself, here and in the hereafter:

وَكُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَائِرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنْشُورًا

“We have tied the actions of every man to his neck;¹ which we will bring forth unto him on the day of resurrection in the form of an unfolded book.” (17: 13)

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا

“(It will be said unto him): Read thou thy book; Sufficeth thine own self today, as reckoner against thee.” (17: 14)

¹. It means that man's action, which is nothing but a fleeting occurrence, has been folded around the neck of the doer which will be brought forth for him on the Day of Resurrection in the form of an unfolded book. The Qur'an says that as the characteristic of a bird (طائر) is to fly away, similarly the characteristic of the action is to be forgotten as soon as it is committed.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Nubuwwah – Prophethood

Belief In Divine Guidance

This is the belief in the principle of Prophethood and Leadership, also termed as 'Divine Vicegerency' or the Central Authority over the universe focalized in man, bestowed by God. This action of 'His' is the manifestation of His Grace and Justice, which again are the manifestations of His Will and Might. His Will and Might are in turn the manifestation of His self-consciousness and Self-Love, which are the immediate manifestations of His Oneness and Infiniteness.

Cherishing implies planning and developing each part of the Plan. It means each part has been provided with all the necessary means to develop its full aptitude. Thus, God gives everything its distinctive limit and then guides it to develop its fullest aptitude. The Qur'an conveys this idea of Cherishing in the verse below:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ

“Said he (Musa): “Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its (suitable) form, and then (also) guided it (aright).” (20:50)

In this way, God cherished matter to develop from its primal form into various complex forms of celestial and terrestrial bodies, and from the simplest form to more and more complex forms of elements (air, water, minerals etc.) and other inanimate beings, till the process of development progressively reached the stage of plant and animal, from its simple and less intricate form into more complex beings, and finally man – the most complex form of being – arrived.

The Lord Cherisher of the Universe thus brings forth man according to the Plan. As a rule, in this process of creation and manifestation, the Centre of every system or society of beings appears first on the scene, and then its satellites; so was the First Man caused to appear on the scene of Creation as the Central Personality, combining in him all the excellences to which he was apt.

Though those excellences might not have been in a developed form yet, there was not any defect in the First Man that unworthy of his position in the Order of Creation. The first man was the top in the hierarchy of the beings, and at the base was primal matter. Adam ('a) carried in him the potentiality of all excellences, which had to manifest and develop in his issues later. The Qur'an asserts:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

“Indeed, We created man in the best structure (mould)” (95:4)

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ

“Then We reverted him to the lowest of the low.” (95:5)

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ

“Save those who believe and do good deeds, for them shall be an incessant recompense.” (95:6)

This deterioration of man to the animal character is of secondary stage only, to which some of the issues of Adam are subjected. Otherwise, among his issues there are persons whose potentialities remained intact, as the exception clause in the above quoted verses asserts. They adhered to their best original mould (mind and body) in which they were created.

Here, it is necessary to clarify certain important points on this subject in order to maintain the continuity of right-thinking and remove the ambiguity resulting from wrong interpretations and assumptions.

Distinction Of Man As He Is Gifted With Free Will

Gifted with the ability for intellectual expression, the appearance of man on the scene of creation marked a new era in the history of the evolutionary course of Creation. That is to say, that he was created with the potentiality to receive impressions from the spiritual and material worlds surrounding him, and to reproduce these impressions in the same form as received, which is termed as 'discovery', or in a new form, termed as 'innovation'.

With the inherent intellectual faculty and the ability of 'discovery and innovation', man appeared on the scene of creation not to be governed by the laws of nature, but to subdue and employ all the natural resources in order to achieve the goal for which the process of Creation began.

That is to say that in order to develop his own Conscious Self as the focus of all that was in the Universe, hidden or apparent, man was ordained to be the most compact and comprehensive representative of God's attributes and excellences. This true representation of God's attributes and excellences by man is submission ('*Ubudiat* or Islam). The various grades of status of vicegerency are in accord with it.

It is the creation of man, which the Qur'an terms as 'the appointment of the Vicegerent of God on Earth':

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Recollect (O' Our Apostle Muhammad!) When said thy Lord unto the angels; 'Verily I (intend to) appoint a vicegerent on earth.” (2:30)

Although the angels (intellectual, physical forces functioning in the process of Creation) and all other material and non-material, celestial and terrestrial beings represent the 'Divine Attributes' in some way or the other, yet none of them is so compact and comprehensive in the representative status as man. That is why every other being has been termed as 'the sign of God' but none except man has been chosen and termed as 'the Vicegerent of God'.

Refutation Of The Fall Of Adam

The specific and precise quantity of matter – that carried the potentiality of becoming man – did not suffer any fall, reversal or shortcoming which might have prevented it from reaching its destiny. The first portion of matter that succeeded in assuming the form of man carried with it all the potentialities for the further development, awaiting the human species.

As mentioned earlier, the first man, without having any drawback or shortcoming, formed the central part or pivot of the human society. This centre, besides governing its own satellites, also governs all the subordinate centres of animal, plant and inanimate societies, on the principle that every higher centre in the evolutionary course of development governs the lower centres. Otherwise, the parts which form the universe as a whole will instantaneously disintegrate.

Thus, the truth is established that man is the topmost among all creatures and foremost in the progressive movements towards the Absolute Perfection (which is the Absolutely Perfect One), Allah. So, it is not justifiable to associate the term original sin with Adam and conceive it as inherited or inheritable by his issues. He is, therefore, the link between the Creator and all His other creatures.

The Concept Of Miracle

When such a man has to appear on the scene of human society and introduce himself to the people as the divine teacher and the representative of God on earth, it is necessary that he should have sufficient evidence to bear testimony to the truth of his declaration; that is, he should utter such words and exhibit such deeds which could not be uttered or performed by any natural means within the ability of a finite being. This is termed as a miracle.

The whole conception, from the oneness of God down to the necessity for prophethood and leadership and the indispensability of the prophets and leaders having sufficient evidence to bear the testimony to the truth of their claim, has been forwarded in the Qur'an:

لَكِنِ الرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ
الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

“But the well-grounded in knowledge among them and the believers (who) believe in what hath

been sent down unto thee and what hath been sent down (unto Our apostles) before thee; and those who establish prayer, and those who give the poor rate (charity) and those who believes in God and the Last Day (of Judgment); These (it is whom) soon We will give a great recompense.” (4: 162)

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا

“Verily, We have revealed unto thee (O' Our Apostle Muhammad) as we did reveal unto Noah and the Apostles after him; We did reveal unto Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jesus and Job and Jonah, and Aaron, and Solomon, and gave We to David the Psalms.” (4: 163)

وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا

“And apostles We have (already) mentioned unto thee before, and Apostles We mentioned not unto thee; and God spoke unto Moses directly discoursing.” (4: 164)

رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

(We sent) apostles as givers of glad tidings and warns, so that there may not remain any argument for people against God, after the messages, (apostles), And God is Mighty, Wise.” (4: 165)

لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

“But God (Himself) heareth Witness, through what He hath sent down unto thee (O' Our Apostle Muhammad), sent He that down, with His knowledge; and the Angels (too) bear witness: and sufficient is God for a Witness” (4: 166)

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

“Indeed, sent We our Apostles with clear proofs, and sent We down with them the Book and the Scale that people may establish in justice; and sent We down iron wherein is latent (in its use) mighty power and also benefits for mankind and that God may prove who helpeth Him and His apostles in secret; Verily God is All-Strong and the Ever-Prevalent.” (57:25)

Knowledge Of The Names Accorded Adam Superiority Over The Angels

The knowledge of the names gave Adam superiority over the angels. The first man had been given – and he carried with him – the names (symbols) of that intellectual beings who were to appear on the scene of creation as the highest forms of human perfection. The appearance of these intellectual beings is inevitable for the realization of divine object by man.

They are the excellent names representing all the 'divine names' in view or their nearness to Allah, and are manifestations of the names of all beings on the account of their 'infallible nature' (i.e. absence of all natural defects). It was due to knowledge of the names of these beings that the reason for Adam, the first man, to be made the Vicegerent of God on earth, and the angels were commanded to prostrate before him.

Then through [1](#) Adam that the angels came to know those 'symbolic names of the intellectual beings' the knowledge of which made man superior to them. This point is explicitly expressed in the Qur'an as quoted below:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

“And He taught Adam the names, all of them, and then set them unto the angels and said: Declare ye unto Me the names of these if ye be truthful.” (2:31)

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

“They said: “Glory be to Thee (O’ Lord!) we have no knowledge save what thou hast taught us, verily Thou (alone) art All-Knowing, the All-Wise.” (2:32)

قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ

“Said He: ‘O’ Adam, inform thou unto them their names’, and when he had informed unto them their names; Said (the Lord): ‘Said I not unto you that verily, I know the secrets of the heavens and the earth and know that which ye declare and that which ye conceal?’.” (2:33)

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ

“And when said We unto the angels “Prostrate ye before Adam” they all prostrated save Iblis, he refrained and was puffed with pride and was turned into one of the reprobates.” (2:34)

The Qur'an As The Everlasting Miracle

Of the numerous evidence forwarded by the Holy Prophet as the proof of his claim, the most important and everlasting is the Qur'an itself:

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

“And say those who disbelieved, Thou art not the Apostle of god. Say thou (O' Our Apostle Muhammad!): ‘Suffice it is God a witness between me and you, and he is with whom is the knowledge of the book.’” (13:43)

It is proved by the Holy Book that it is not only a testimony of Muhammad (S) being the last of all prophets and foremost in the sequence of divine leadership, but also of Muhammad (S) being in himself a proof of the authenticity of other divine religions and prophets. The personality, excellences and the divine guidance of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) are supreme in the series of divine leadership and every word of his is final.

The specific titles that the Holy Prophet has given to the divine leaders who preceded him and those who would come after him should be accepted as the only testimonial for their divine excellence. Whoever has been addressed by the Holy Prophet with the title of 'Nabi', 'Rasool', 'Imam', 'Mawla', 'Siddique', 'Khalifa' or 'Mu'min' will be considered as such.

Among all the divine books the Qur'an is signified by the title or 'Muhaimin' which is one of the excellent names of God meaning the 'authoritative Guardian'. The Qur'an is forwarded to mankind as the unchallengeable word of God and the greatest of all miracles of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) till eternity.

لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ لِنَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“Had We sent down this Qur'an, on the mountain, thou (O' Our apostle Muhammad) wouldst certainly have seen it (the mountain) humbled itself and rent asunder for the fear²of God; And We set forth similitudes unto mankind that they may reflect.” (59:21)

The Qur'an, as the word of God, is a prodigious dynamic force and has been working in the minds of mankind by producing revolution and evolution in the human society. It has cured the blind and deaf in heart by feeding them with new thought and knowledge.

By applying even only a very negligible portion of this dynamic force – and that too in not quite a proper manner – the Muslims succeeded in establishing the great civilization and culture known to historians as Islamic. If the force of the Qur'an were to be put into action in its entirety with all the precision implied in it, it will not only totally change the face of human civilization, but it will at the same time change the relation of every part and component of this apparent whole universe.

The spiritual appreciation of the point that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the in the series of prophethood and the first and topmost in the order of Leadership, is beautifully expressed in the Persian quatrain:

پیش از همه شاهان غیور آمده

هر چند که آخر بظهور آمده

انے ختم رسل قرب تو معلوم شد

دیر آمده از راه دور آمده

“Thou hast come before all the proud kings of the world, though has appeared last of all. O' Last of the Prophets, thy nearness (to God) has become known to me: Thou comest last, as thou comest from the farthest distance (which distance is nearest to God).”

Divine Law Of Selection

Ever since his appearance on the scene, Adam too did not suffer any fall, drawback or shortcoming in his progressive course. Adam propagated, and his issues began to multiply, but it was necessary that in the lineage of his issue there should be a 'line' carrying with it this potentiality further and further, and at no stage in this lineage diminishing or defect should occur which would mar its progress.

This is termed as the 'Divine Law of Selection 'Istafa' (إِصْطَفَاءُ) which is synonymous with *Ismat Khalqi* (عصمت خلقي) i.e. infallibility of nature in recipiency of the chosen issues of this lineage which is the basis of the infallibility of their will–power – *Ismat al-Khulqi* (عصمت خلقي) when they reach a conscious stage. This is the source of their action, which is completely submissive to the will of God.

This is the perfect submission that the will of the creature should be the manifestation of the Will of the Creator and his action should be in complete obedience to His order. The principle of Divine Selection is explained in the following Qur'anic verses:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

“Verily, God did choose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of Imran above all the worlds,” (3:33)

ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِن بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“Offspring, one from the other; and verily God is All-Hearing; All-Knowing.” (3:34)

Continuity Of Vicegerency In The Form Of Prophethood Or Imamah (Divine Leadership) – Finality Of Prophethood And Continuity Of The Latter

From Adam to Noah, from Noah to Ibrahim and his descendants in two branches – the Ismailites and Israelites – this potentiality began to actualize in the form of many apostles and leaders different from each other in the limitation or the nature of the task entrusted to them by God and to the extent of the time and space of their jurisdiction.

Along with the progress of the human intellectual faculty of discovery and innovation in the spiritual and material spheres, the task and jurisdiction of vicegerency had to on one hand end, while on the other hand it had to develop from particularity to universality. The divine guidance – which started with Adam and was conducted by the successive vicegerents of God in the course of its progress towards universality – should reach its final stage.

This does not mean the end of progress. It means that mankind does not require any new guidance and instruction to be imparted by the medium of a new divine teacher. It implies that the guidance and instructions already acquired by man are now sufficient for him, in the course of his further progress.

The above point has an example in the system of education which begins with the primary schools and reaches its finality at the university level. But the attainment of the highest degree will not mean that there is no more room left for any further attainment, in theory, or in practice, for a degree-holder.

Applying Man’s Intellectual Faculty

All that is required at this stage is the application of man’s intellectual faculty to the guidance acquired by him in order to find out the implications of that divine guidance. In other words, when revelation reaches its final stage of universality and comprehensiveness, there shall be no room left for any new divine messages to be revealed to man.

The subsequent phases will be as follows:

- a. The consolidation period or the codification of revelation.
- b. The rationalization of revelation
- c. The implementation of rationalized revelation throughout the sphere of humanity.

Thus, the very conception of prophethood and apostleship has in it the implication of finality when human intellectual faculty reaches its maturity; maturity the sense of being able to grasp denotation, connotation and implications of revelation through rational approach. Man may not always remain incapable of grasping divine guidance through his power of reasoning.

The question of non-recipientcy does not arise in relation to the rationalization of revelation because the continuity of life and rationalization are inseparable. The perfection of life is a guarantee for the perfection of the rationalization of revelation, and these stages of perfection belong to the period of implementation of revelation that we are now passing through. Thus, there is no necessity for a new revelation. Divine revelation in this sense came to end with the departure of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S), the last of all prophets.

However, humanity is, indeed, in perpetual need of and is dependent on divine blessings and cherishing, and it cannot survive without being nurtured by these divine blessings. The divine leadership or medium, in his role of receiving blessings from God and diffusing the same to the world, has no finality in this sense.

1. There is no precise declaration in the Qur'an about Adam being 'Nabi' (prophet) or 'Rasool' (divine messenger), but the relevant verses in Chapter 2 (al-Baqarah) assert clearly that God directly taught Adam 'names', and Adam taught these names to the angels. The angels prostrated before Adam due to his knowledge of the names, and Satan rebelled against Him and was inflicted by the wrath of Allah.

Adam, after his descent, received a word of prayer from God directly and turned towards Him to redress his destitution and was blessed. In light of these verses, it is an undeniable fact that Adam was khalifatullah (divine vicegerent) and divine prophet.

2. 'Fear' means 'awe' felt due to the gravity and grace of the object. Khashiat (خَشْيَةٌ) in the Qur'an almost always conveys the above sense.

3. The process of divine selection (istifa') begins with Adam and reaches Noah and Ibrahim and from Ibrahim it divides into two branches of Ibrahim's progeny – Aali Ibrahim and Aali Imran (Israelites). Though the name of Ibrahim is not mentioned in this verse, Muhammad (s) being in the lineage of Ibrahim, the process of divine selection can rightly be attributed to him (Ibrahim).

Here, in our discussion of this point it should be borne in mind that every member in the line of Muhammad-e-Mustafa (s) is not Mustafa (i.e. divinely selected person) because of the law of inheritance whereby the excellence of posterity is the

result of the ancestor's excellence (i.e of root's). But the excellence of ancestors (i.e. the root) is not a guarantee for the excellence of the posterity (branches).

At various places in the Qur'an, it is narrated that Aali Ibrahim are divinely selected beings, but this particular phrase in this particular context refers to the infallible persons from Aali Ibrahim (i.e. the fourteen Ma'soomin).

[1] [1]

SHARES

The Divine Leadership – Imamah

Belief In Divinely Appointed Leader

This is the belief in the necessity of divinely chosen leadership as a medium between the Creator and the creatures, and its continuity till the resurrection day. This again is an outcome of the principle of God's cherishing.

In order to keep man on the progressive right path during his journey towards the ultimate object of creation, God ordained that in the human society there shall never be a vacuum with respect to a 'pivot' or 'central man' who is blessed by God directly, and through whom the whole community of mankind is blessed.

A blessed pivot as such functions in two ways. First, as the medium between the Absolute and finite beings and second, as the standard and model for guidance of humanity. As a medium, he should continue to exist successively without an interval, from the beginning of creation i.e. since the existence of Adam – the first man – till the achievement of the ultimate object of creation.

In the performance of this function, it is not necessary that he should be known to every member of the human society. But as a model and standard for the guidance of the other members of the society he should be known to them, and continuity is not necessary. It may be from time to time with interval in between. During this period, the pivot remains incognito in order to give opportunities to individuals for using their discretion and free will in their activities and in developing their aptitude. The guidance should not entail any blind following. Thus, the continuity of the presence of the model on the scene of human society as a teacher and guide is not needed.

In other words, constant and continuous existence of a perfect man one after another as a pivot of human society is a necessary sequence of the principle of 'universal cherishing' (*Rububiyah al-Mutlaqa*) although his presence as an identifiable person is not always necessary. This function of the Pivot is termed as '*Imamah*' or '*khilafat* or the vicegerency of God on earth'.

Such a personality – in functioning as a teacher and guide to the members of human society – provides

them with all the requisite means to develop their aptitude fully, of their own free will and choice. This function is needed only from time to time, and not continuously. Thus, the presence of the Pivot is necessary when he performs this function, which is termed as '*Nubuwwah*' (prophethood). This is the distinctive function of conveying the divine message of God to mankind and informing them of what is right and what is wrong, so that they may choose any one of these two courses – right or wrong – of their own free will.

Thus, it will be observed that every prophet of God is an *Imam* (divinely appointed leader) as well as *Rasool* or *Nabi* (divine prophet or messenger of God). All the imams (divinely appointed leaders), on the other hand, are not necessarily divine prophets or messengers of God. They are divinely appointed successors (or executors) to the prophets of God and the vicegerents of God on earth.

The first function i.e. 'prophethood' assumed its complete and perfect form with the revelation and declaration of the Qur'anic verses:

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

“And perfect is the word of thy Lord in truth and justice; There is none who can change His words, and He is the All-Hearing and All-Knowing.” (6:115)

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“.... This day have I perfected for you, your religion, and have completed My favour on you, and chosen for you Islam (to be) the Religion” (5:3)

As for the second function, the person who has been commissioned by God to deliver the last message and guidance (the Qur'an) is also the topmost in leadership. As such, his divine leadership shall continue till the Resurrection Day. This is the great kingdom (*Mulk al-Adheem*) given by God to Aali Ibrahim in addition to the book and wisdom which He has gifted them.

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَى مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا

“Or do they envy the people for what God hath given them of His grace; But indeed, We have given to Abraham's children the Book and the Wisdom and We gave them a Great Kingdom.” (4:54)

'The book' refers to the last message, the Holy Qur'an, which comprehends all the previous revelations. The 'Wisdom' refers to the intellectual Power of the purified members of the children of Ibrahim to give true interpretation of the last book of God. The phrase 'great kingdom' refers to the kingdom, which is

declared 'Great' by God, and not which many men consider it great or otherwise. This 'great kingdom' is the kingdom of God.

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا فِيهِنَّ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“God’s is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what (all) is in them; and He (alone) hath the power over all things. (5: 120)

The 'great kingdom' on one hand means the authority and power (*ul' il-amr*) that God has gifted them to execute His will and on the other hand means the absolute obedience to their order and directives that God has made incumbent on the people. This power and authority with which the prophet was endowed, and which continued with the successive imams of his house did not manifest to mankind in its entirety. In other words, the practical domination and exercise of divine authority over mankind (in particular) and the universe (in general) have not come to be evident as to be realised by everyone.

The first gift of God to the family of Ibrahim had already come into manifestation in the form of the Qur'an the Book, the word of God. The second gift, that of 'wisdom', became evident in the form of the teachings and precepts of the last of 'His' prophets and his divinely purified and declared successors. The third gift, that of the great kingdom of God – although had already been bestowed on them along with the other two gifts – is to be manifested totally (*Zuhoor al-Kuli*) at the destined time.

Therefore, it is true that Prophethood (*Risalat al-Ilahiah*) has reached its final stage through the last of the divine messengers, Muhammad (S) and there is no further divine messenger to be delivered to mankind; and the wisdom which Muhammad (S) and his divinely purified successors were endowed with by God – in its delivery to mankind passed through gradual stages and reached its finality through the eleventh imam of the house of the Holy Prophet, Hasan al-Askari ('a).

The first of the two gifts, the Book, in its gradual revelation, reached its final stage of completion about three months before the demise of the Holy Prophet (S). The second gift – wisdom or divinely gifted power of understanding and explaining the contents of the book – needed a long period. It took nearly three hundred years to reach its final stage. This is the period during which the eleven declared imams from the house of prophet had to shoulder the task of placing the requisite wisdom or explanatory divine directives within the reach of the people as a supplementary part of the constitution of Islam.

These two gifts are termed as *Kitab* and *Sunnah* i.e. teachings of the Holy Prophet. To perform the task of conveying and placing them within the reach of the people, the presence of imams as teachers was necessary. However, the constitution reached its final stage in the sense that the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet, as supplementary part of the constitution, were mirrored in the lives and teachings of the imams of the house and this was recorded in the form of collections like *al-Kafi*. Then there was no need for the presence of imam as a teacher.

On the contrary, it was a divine blessing that the imam of the time should disappear from the scene as teacher so that the people may have respite and chance to apply their power of reasoning and discretion in order to grasp, understand and digest the denotations, connotations and implications of the divine constitution i.e. the *kitab* and *Sunnah*. It was a blessing to give people the chance of putting all out efforts to rationalize the revelation. This period is termed the period of *Ijtihad*.

Therefore, the continuous existence of vicegerents of God on the earth is an outcome of divine Grace (*lutf Ilahi*). The appearance of these vicegerents from time to time in the form of prophets, messengers and divine teachers is another manifestation of His grace. The *incognito* existence of the vicegerents during the interval between the prophets before the advent of the last prophet and the *incognito* existence of the twelfth imam from the house of Holy Prophet –after the completion of the teaching period of the divine constitution – are further manifestations of grace of God (*Lutf al-Akhir*).

When this period of rationalization or application of the human power of reasoning (*Ijtihad*) reaches its climax, in a right or wrong course, the time will be ripe for the universal manifestation of the great Kingdom of *Aali Ibrahim* or '*Wilayat Muhammad*', bestowed upon the family of Ibrahim in the person of the last guide or leader (imam) of the house of Muhammad (S).

This twelfth imam, Mahdi ('a), and no one else, can claim to combine in him all the spiritual and blood heritage from Adam to the last prophet, Muhammad (S). He represents both the branches of the house of Ibrahim – the Ismailite branch through his father and Israilite branch through his mother Nargis, who was a direct descendant of Simon Peter, the true successor of the holy prophet Jesus ('a).

The Last Imam will appear with psychic and spiritual forces on his disposal, which surpass in potency all the physical forces known to mankind at the climax or end of the 'period of Rationalisation'. The potency of this Force as compared to that of the Atomic Energy can be appreciated if we compare the latter to the primitive energy of mules and camels. The energy used by man at present has over- come all the space distances of the earth by means of radio, television, supersonic jets and other atomic devices. Above this, man in his rational progress of dominating matter expects to establish communication with outer- space regions and other planets.

But with the use of physical and spiritual force of unimaginable dynamism, the twelfth and last of the divinely appointed guides and leaders, the Last Imam of the Age (*Imam al-Asr*) will not only remove the spatial distance between people of different regions, but he will also remove the time distances in between and establish direct communication with those who in our limited concept of time are considered to have been of the past.

This will come to be evident at the advent, or appearance, of the last imam. The establishment of communication with the present and past is termed 'the Return' (*Raja'ah*) which is the minor or lesser resurrection. This will usher the era of the manifestation of the Great Kingdom of God, which He has bestowed on the family of Ibrahim in fulfillment of His promise:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

**“(This is) the promise of God! Faileth not God His promise, but most people know not (this).”
(30:6)**

It must however be emphasized that the appearance of the last imam shall not, in whatsoever manner, affect any change or abrogation in the religion of Islam, as presented by the last of the divine messengers, the topmost divine guides and leaders, Muhammad (S) inclusive of the explanatory comments given by him and his divinely purified successors, the eleven imams. This era signifies the evidence of the practical execution of all the denotations, connotations and implications of those ‘divine teachings’ under the ‘great kingdom’ of Al al-Ibrahim.

The state of affairs at the climax of the ‘minor resurrection’ and the ushering in of the major resurrection can be better appreciated if we ponder over the comparison – that was already indicated – between the ushering in of the ‘minor resurrection’ and the climax of *Ijtihad* (the application of human power of reasoning).

In concluding the discourse on ‘belief in *Imamah*’ we should emphatically bear in mind the following points as part of the belief:

- (1) The continuity of *Imamah* as a medium between the Creator and the creatures; and that an imam may live in a manner by which he is identifiable or in one that he is not.
- (2) The status of *Imamah* is a divine gift given to none but a person who is purified from all physical and spiritual defects and uncleanness which may affect the state of his absolute submission to the Will of God (*Ubudiat al-Mutlaqa*). Thus, the Imam of the time means a person who is foremost in the hierarchy of creatures in obedience to the will of God and in representing His Will to mankind: this is submission for which *jinn*s and man are created.
- (3) This *Imamah* starts with Adam, and through a successive chain of the most submissive persons descended from him, reached Ibrahim; from Ibrahim is continued in two branches of Israilites and Ismailites. The Israilites branch ended with its last link Jesus (‘a) who disappeared from this terrestrial scene in an unusual way. The Ismailites branch continued to carry the same submissive status generation after generation without any gap but remained in non-recognisable manner till it appeared in the person of the Holy Prophet (S).

وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِ لَخَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ

“And that which have revealed unto thee of the book, it is the truth testifying that which hath before it, verily God, about His servants is All-aware, All-Seeing.” (35:31)

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ

“Then made We the inheritors of the book (Qur’an) those who chose we from among our servants; and of them is those who causeth himself to suffer a loss, and of them is he who followeth the middle course, and of them is he who is the foremost in goodness by God’s permission; This is that which is the greatest excellence” (35:32)

(4) The Qur'an declared that the chain would continue after the prophet in the same chosen and purified members of his house, and they shall inherit whatever God has gifted to Aali Ibrahim. The Prophet declared in unequivocal terms:

مَنْ مَاتَ وَلَمْ يَعْرِفْ إِمَامَ زَمَانِهِ مَاتَ مَيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ

“Whoever dies without knowing the imam of his time, his death will be pagan death (Jahilyyah)”¹

He also declared in unequivocal terms that the number of imams after him shall be twelve, not more or not less. He, according to *Ithna Asha'ari* school of thought also mentioned the names of all the twelve imams who will succeed each other. There are many traditions narrated from Sunni sources supporting the above conclusion.

In any case throughout the history of Islam no one can point out the names of the twelve persons from the Ismailite branch of Aali Ibrahim, who after the Holy Prophet, succeeded each other, carrying in them the excellence and purity that would make them deserve the status of being foremost in submission to the Will of God, apart from the Holy Twelve Imams of the house of Holy Prophet.

The last of them, the Mahdi ('a) is, as already pointed out, the son of the eleventh imam. He was born on the fifteenth of Sha'aban 254 H in Samarra, Iraq. He combines in him – as his eleven predecessors did – all the excellences required for inheriting *Imamah* (the divine leadership) of Ibrahim, which was carried by the two branches (Israilites: and Ismailites).

He represents Aali Ibrahim in its full significance. He had been born and is living in terrestrial form as a pivot and medium between the Creator and the creatures but in a non-identifiable manner, till the period of *Ijtihad* is over. For the person of such great spiritual accomplishment, the question 'length of life' does not arise. His soul is strong and high and is far from being fettered with conditions of matter. His will-power controls his body and other material things, so his life and death are under his disposal and his will is controlled by none but by 'His' (God's) Will.

(5) The Imam's reappearance will follow the immediate descent of Jesus ('a) as his follower. As such, the Imam shall establish the Great Kingdom of Aali Ibrahim throughout the world.

(6) The establishment of his kingdom will necessarily be associated with and followed by the 'minor resurrection' which means the 'return' of all the leading righteous personalities who had performed an important role in promoting this right cause. Along with their return, a group of their opponents – wrongdoers who had played a leading role against the sacred cause – will also be brought to the scene for condemnation.

This belief in the minor resurrection or return of the leading righteous personalities and the leading wicked ones does not mean any rebirth. Nor does it imply the Hindu and Greek theories of transmigration of soul into a new body through the process of birth. It actually means a gathering of a group of leading personalities, who have died before, in the final stage of the total manifestation of the great kingdom of Aali Ibrahim.

They gather and meet each other in the same manner as in the major resurrection, whereby all individuals and groups who lived in different times and places will meet each other. The difference between the two resurrections and returns is only this. In one, it will be partial, while in the other it will be total (resurrection). *Raja'ah* means *Qiyamah al-Sughra* and *Qiyamah* means *Raja'ah al-Kubra*, in what manner and shape the former and the latter are possible is asserted in the Qur'an.

A brief sketch of the life of twelve imams along with the life of Holy Prophet (S) and his daughter Fatimah ('a), the lady of paradise, and their contribution towards the advancement of Islam and the message will be dealt with separately.

The point to be noted here is that the eleventh imam, Al-Hasan al-Askari ('a), passed away on the 8th of Rabiul Awwal 260 H at Samerra – the military cantonment of Abbasid Caliphs – in Iraq. The twelfth Imam, Al-Mahdi ('a) was then about six years old. Although his birth, like the birth of Moses, for almost the same reasons, was kept in secrecy, yet ever since his birth the eleventh imam used to introduce him to his chosen and trusted disciples as his successor and the expected 'Mahdi' of the holy house.

The eleventh imam used to reiterate and confirm the prophecies of his predecessors regarding the occultation of the 'twelfth' and his continuous existence for a very long time in the terrestrial realm in non-recognizable manner, discharging his duty as a pivot and medium between the Creator and His creatures. He is the real administrator of his jurisdiction, which is as wide as the jurisdiction of the messengership of his grandfather, the last prophet which is as extensive as the universe of the Lord, the Cherisher.

He receives divine blessings and grace and diffuses them to his surroundings in unknown and non-recognisable way. During this period of occultation his relation to this terrestrial region and his domination over it is not severed and or ceased; it is only the people that ceased to have regular and recognizable communication with him.

This period of occultation is divided into two parts – minor and major. During the period of the minor occultation the regular communication between the people with the imam did not totally cease. People

used to have regular communication and correspondence with the imam mostly through his four nominated successive agents known as *Nawab al-Arba'ah* (four deputies). Some of the prominent disciples had even the chance of direct communication with the imam.

The four nominated deputies were:

1. Uthman Ibn Sa'id al-Amry. He used to discharge the duties of deputy during the life of the tenth imam and the eleventh imam.
2. Uthman's son Muhammad Ibn Uthman. He also used to discharge the duties of the deputy during the two previous imams. Both the father and son were certified by the tenth and eleventh imams as their most reliable and sincere representatives.
3. Abul Qasim Al-Husayn Ibn Ruh al-Nawbakhti. He was nominated by Muhammad Ibn Uthman as his succeeding deputy.
4. Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Samarri. He succeeded the third through nomination by the third. All these nominations were confirmed by showing irrefutable testimonies.

This period lasted for seventy years. It ended with the death of the fourth deputy in the year 330 H., one year after the death of Kulaini, the author of *Kafi*. Al-Samarri received an Epistle from the imam ten days before his death to the effect that the period of minor occultation was over and we should not nominate anyone to succeed him as his special deputy. During this period, a few imposters claimed to have the status of deputy, but all were exposed by the Imam and were denounced by the Shi'a School of thought.

Then the second part, the 'major occultation' (*ghaibat al-kubra*) started which continued till the time of reappearance of the *imam*. During this period, no person – who is particularly nominated as deputy – has been existing or will exist. Almost all the imams – and particularly the tenth, eleventh and twelfth imams – declared and affirmed the authoritative status of those pious and righteous scholars who were exclusively following the faith of *Ithna Asha'ari* and have attained the scholarly ability to understand the denotations, connotations and implications of the aforesaid constitution of Islam, the *kitab* and *Sunnah* through sound rational approach which is termed as *Ijtihad*.

This class of scholars have been declared by the vicegerents of God to have the right of discharging the duty of a person deputed and nominated by the *imams* within the limit of their ability. According to the *kitab* and *Sunnah* the people who have not attained the standard of scholarly ability termed as *Ijtihad*,

has to follow – in all the debatable issues – the opinion of living *mujtahid* who is the superior most in knowledge and piety.

In case there is no person who is most superior or that he is not identifiable, the non-*mujtahid* has the option to adopt one of the topmost *mujtahids* of equal standard and follow his opinion in the debatable issues. The author has dealt with the subject in his *Treatise on Occultation*. For further details, one should refer to the chapters on *Ijtihad* and *Taqlid* in the literature on the principle of Shi'a jurisprudence.

During this period of major occultation there are many reliable accounts of communications and contacts between certain persons with the twelfth *imam*, but all those stories and events show that the contact or communication was mere accidental and circumstantial. Thus, none can claim to have the honour of regular communications with him (the *Imam*). There is no doubt that piety, devotion and attachment to the holy house and their directives bring one – in his effort to solve the problems of religious importance facing him – to the state of receiving more blessings and inconspicuous guidance from the *imam*

However, the recognition of the authoritative status of qualified living *mujtahids* of the time – as representatives and general deputies of the imam – during his major occultation, is a necessary part of the theocratic form of governance recognized and advocated by the *Ithna Asha'ari* Schools of Shi'a faith. It differs from all theocratic forms of governance recognized or advocated by other schools in Islam or in other religions of the world.

This has nothing to do with any temporal and secular forms of government (be it monarchy, constitutional or despotic, dictatorship, democracy or republic). It differs from the form of *Imamah* prescribed by Zaidi schools of Shi'ism or *Hazir Imams* of the *Sabbahi* schools of Ismaili Shi'a, or the *Da'ie* leadership of *Msta Ali* School of Ismailites. It also differs from the authority status recognized by some schools for the saints of the mystic order²

¹. Sunni Sources: Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, V. 28, P. 88; Saheeh Muslim, V. 3, P. 1478; Hilyatul Awliyaa' by al-Asbahani, V.3, P. 244; Kitab Al-Sunnah by Ibn Abi 'Aasim, V.2, P.503; Al-Sunan Al-Khubra by al-Bayhaqi, V.8, P. 270; Saheeh ibn Hibbaan, V.10, P.434; Sunan Abi Dawood, V.3, P.425; Al-Mo'jam Al-Kabeer by al-Tabaraani, V.19, P.334 and many others.

Shi'i Sources: Kitab Al-Kafi by al-Kulaini 2; 21; Kamaal Al-Deen by Al-Sadouq; 2;409; Kifayat Al-Athar by Al-Khazzaz 296, and others. [Note by Al-Islam.org].

². [Treatise on Occultation](#) by the same author.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Resurrection – Qiyyamah

Belief In Resurrection

Resurrection is belief in the manifestation of the highest sphere of God's authority over and above all His creatures:

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ

“What! Think they not that they shall be raised” (83:4)

لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ

“For a Great Day” (83:5)

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“The day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of the worlds?” (83:6)

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

“And what maketh thee know what the Day of Judgment is?” (82: 17)

تُمْ مَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

“Then again what maketh thee know what the Day of Judgment is?” (82: 18)

يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ

“(It is) The day on which no soul owns not anything (helpful) for another soul; and the (entire) command on that day shall be God's (alone).” (82: 19)

The day when the fact is realized, all the agencies of creatures will be submerged in the will of God. This is the day when the willpower bestowed on man by God to choose his actions will come to an end.

Resurrection (*Qiyamah*) literally means to 'rise', but as a religious term it means 'to rise to a higher state of life'. It has been applied to the lives of individuals after death and the intermediate stage. The saying of the Holy Prophet (S) is:

مَنْ مَاتَ فَقَدْ قَامَتْ قِيَامَتُهُ

'He, who dies, his rise has been realised'.¹

The term 'resurrection' has also been applied to the days of the establishment of the Divine Kingdom on earth – in 'the person' of the vicegerents of God – as the 'lesser resurrection' (*Qiyamah al-Sughr*). But 'resurrection' is a term mostly used in the Qur'an and the prophet's sayings particularly for the final collective rise of mankind, and generally of other creatures, to the highest sphere of manifestation of God's authority and kingdom:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِمَنْ خَافَ عَذَابَ الْآخِرَةِ ذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَجْمُوعٌ لَهُ النَّاسُ وَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَشْهُودٌ

“Verily, in this there is a sign for him who feareth the chastisement of the hereafter; the day for which mankind shall be gathered together, and that day shall be witnessed (by all)” (11:103)

قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ

“Say thou (O' Our Apostle Muhammad!): “Verily the ancients and the later ones” (from beginning to the end).” (56:49)

لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَىٰ مِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَعْلُومٍ

“Shall certainly be gathered together unto the tryst of the known day.” (56:50)

From the Qur'anic verses quoted herein – and several other verses – together with the prophet's sayings, the following facts about the life hereafter are established beyond any doubt.

1. Death does not mean the annihilation of the conscious and cognitive ego. The ego after its severance from its material body does continue being conscious of itself and of its past.
2. Death is merely a migration from one state or phase or stage of lesser sensitivity to another of higher sensitivity.
3. Of the sensory faculties, whether external or internal, none is destroyed by 'death'; on the contrary, all

these are further refined and sharpened.

4. The only relationship which is severed by death is the direct relationship of the conscious ego with the outer material world, with which it was connected through external senses.

5. The whole attention of the conscious ego will be diverted to

a. The memories of the past and what are preserved in the subconscious, and even unconscious layers of the ego:

b. The higher spheres of beings above the conscious ego (the angelical realm). In other words, the focal centre of human consciousness will no longer receive any direct stimulation through external senses; but it does receive stimulation from within its limited spheres beyond the material spheres. Therefore, 'death' should be taken as a step towards a higher stage of life, whether pleasant or painful. The pleasure or pain of a newborn child – whose external and internal sensations are not yet developed – is less in degree to those of a mature person. Similarly, the pleasure or pain of the conscious ego after death is greater in degree than the one who is still fettered with the material world. The Qur'an expresses this fact in the following verse:

لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ

“(It will be said): Thou wert heedless of this now have We removed from thee thy veil, so thy sight today is sharp.” (50:22)

Therefore, the material life is a veil on human senses and consciousness. Upon the removal of this veil by death, all the faculties are sharpened. This is confirmed by the tradition of the Holy Prophet (S) who said:

النَّاسُ نِيَامٌ فَإِذَا مَا تَوَّأ انْتَبَهُوْ

“Man is (at present) in a state of deep. When he dies, he will be awake”.

6. The movement of every individual as well – as the communities of beings as a whole – is towards God, who has created them. The Qur'an points out this fact:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَاهَا

“They ask thee of ‘the hour’ (the constant move) whereto (is) its anchorage?” (79:42)

فِيمَ أَنْتَ مِنْ ذِكْرَاهَا

“Wherein art thou of its nation?” (79:43)

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنْتَهَاهَا

“Unto thy Lord (alone) is its termination!” (79:44)

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ مَّنْ يَخْشَاهَا

“Thou (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!) art only a warner unto him who feareth it.” (79:45)

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“Say thou (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!): Verily the death which ye flee, verily it meeteth you, then ye shall be returned unto the Knower of the unseen and the seen then will He inform you whatever ye used to do.” (62:8)

The epitome of this movement is expressed in another verse:

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

“Those who, when misfortune befalleth them, say: ‘verily we are God’s and verily unto Him shall we return.’” (2: 156)

Thus, there is no return to the lower stage of consciousness and there is no possibility whatsoever of any rebirth.

Death is, therefore, nothing but a shift and change from one stage of existence to a higher one which ultimately terminates towards God. This ascending movement is true of every part and particle of the material universe with its specific communities and systems, and it is true also of the whole universe.

As mentioned earlier, shifting of any being from this material world mean its resurrection: such

resurrection may be of an individual, or a group of entities, or of all groups and communities of beings. The state or stage between the death of an individual, a member of a group in creation, and the death or resurrection of the whole group is termed the intermediate stage.

In this intermediary stage, the individual may enjoy or suffer the consequences of his individual faith and action. Therefore, this stage is also known as Purgatory: it begins with the agony of death – the last moment of the departure of the soul from the body – to the next stages, which include the funeral and burial in whatsoever form these may be. The Qur'an portrays this moment as follows:

فَلَوْلَا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلُقُومَ

“Why then do ye not (help) when the soul of the dying man cometh up to the throat?” (56:83)

وَأَنْتُمْ حِينِيذٍ تَنْظُرُونَ

“And ye then (remain) only gazing (at him).” (56:84)

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ

“And We are nearer to him than ye, but ye see (Us) not” (56:85)

The immediate and pressing pain and pleasure will be experienced by the departed soul, followed by the questioning put to him by the specific angelical guards attached to every individual. This will be augmented by the appearance of the individual records of his past, which will cause him to rejoice or to grieve.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ

“Until, when death cometh unto one of them, sayeth he: my Lord! Send me back again (into the world),” (23:99)

لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

“That I may be (the) good which I have left undone. By no means! it is but a word he sayeth; and after them shall be a barrier until the day when they are raised (again).” (23: 100)

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

“And indeed, We created man, and We know whatever his soul whispereth unto him, and We are nearer to him than his (very) life-vein.” (50: 16)

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ

“When receive (and record all doings) the two (receiver angels) appointed to receive, sitting, (one) on the right and (the other) on the left.” (50: 17)

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

“He pronounceth not a word but is unto him a watcher ready (to record).” (50: 18)

وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ

“And the stupor of death cometh in truth; that is (the state) which thou wast wont to shun” (50: 19)

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْوَعِيدِ

“And when the Trumpet is blown, it is the day promised (warned against).” (50:20)

وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ

“And every soul shall come, accompanied with it a driver and a witness.” (50:21)

لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ

“(It will be said): Thou wert heedless of this, now We have removed from thee thy veil, so thy sight today is sharp.” (50:22)

وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ تُقْفَا عَلَى النَّارِ فَقَالُوا يَا لَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَلَا نُكَذِّبُ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“And couldst thou see when they are made confronting the (hell) fire, then they shall, say, ‘would that we were sent back and we would not belie the signs of our Lord, and we would be of the believers.’” (6:27)

بَلْ بَدَأَ لَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

“Nay it has been manifested to them what they did conceal before; and if they were sent back they would certainly return to what they were forbidden and most certainly they are liars.” (6:28)

In this intermediate stage, the individual cannot do anything to redeem the wrong done by him in the past nor can he improve his position by any further action of his; but the good deeds of the living members of the family or group to which he belongs may be of avail to him in reducing his pain or magnifying his pleasures.

Moreover, the holy and exalted souls leading the group to which they belong, have the ability to redeem his sins and increase his pleasures. Despite the severance of physical ties, the spiritual tie of love between the departed soul with the righteous souls left behind – or with those righteous souls who had departed before him – is not severed: this love transcends all material barriers.

Therefore, there is a way possible for salvation for the individual soul in the intermediate stage. It is not by his own action, but by the blessings and good deeds of the righteous members of his family or the group to which he (that individual soul) belongs. The Qur'anic passages assert the benefits of prayers and blessings of the righteous ones such as the prophets, for their departed ancestors, their followers, disciples and for their offspring and posterity.

The prayers of those who are the ‘carriers of the throne of God’ (bearers of the divine knowledge) and of those believers whose status is closer to them, are the best evidence of the permanence of the spiritual bond of love of the higher exalted souls of a group with the lower souls belonging to the same group.

الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا فَاغْفِرْ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ

“Those who bear the ‘Arsh’ and those around it celebrate the praise of their Lord and believe in Him and seek forgiveness for those who believe in Him (saying) ‘O our Lord! Thou comprehendeth all things in (Thy) mercy and knowledge, therefore, forgive Thou those who turn (unto Thee) and follow Thy way, and save them from the torment of the Hell.” (40:7)

رَبَّنَا وَأَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ الَّتِي وَعَدْتَهُمْ وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

“O Our Lord! Admit them into the ever-blissful gardens which Thou hast promised unto them and those who do good from their fathers, and their wives, and their children; for Thou art the Almighty, the All-Wise.” (40:8)

وَقِهِمُ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَمَنْ تَقِ السَّيِّئَاتِ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمْتَهُ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

“And keep them from evil: and whomsoever keepest thou off from evil this day indeed thou hast bestowed mercy on him, and that, it is a mighty achievement.” (40:9)

الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا قُلْ فَادْرِءُوا عَنِ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

“(These are those) who said unto their brethren while themselves sat (at home) ‘Had they (the martyrs) obeyed us, they would not have been slain;’ Say (O’ our apostle Muhammad!): ‘ward off from yourself death if ye be truthful.’” (3: 168)

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أحيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

“Reckon not those who are slain in the way of God, to be dead; Nay! Alive they are with their Lord being sustained, (in the presence of their Lord).” (3: 169)

فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

“Rejoicing in what God of His grace hath granted them, rejoicing for those who have not yet joined them from behind them, that no fear shall come on them nor shall they grieve.” (3: 170)

وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ دَيَّارًا

“And said Noah: O’ my Lord! Leave Thou not on earth, of the unbelievers, a single dweller (alive):” (71:26)

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِمَنْ دَخَلَ بَيْتِي مُؤْمِنًا وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا

“O my lord! Forgive Thou me and my parents and him who entereth my abode believing (in Thee), and the believing men and tire believing women, and increase not unto the unjust ones in aught save perdition.” (71:28)

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا وَاجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ

“And when said Abraham: My Lord! make this city secure and keep me away, and my sons, from worshipping idols.” (14:35)

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ

“O' my Lord! make me establish prayer and (also) some from my offspring (to do the same): O' Our Lord! accept thou my prayer!” (14:40).

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

“O' Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents and the believers on the day when the reckoning shall be established!” (14:41)

The intercessions, which are evident from the Qur'anic verses, may apply to the Intermediate stages or to the stage of total resurrection (*Qiyamah e Kubra*). However, there shall be no more intercession after the end of total resurrection.

After the lesser resurrection, and preparatory to the last stage, all beings will die, in the sense that they will have to depart from their previous forms and shapes. This includes all the celestial and terrestrial entities, which will give out all their latent potentialities.

This state will be preceded by the 'first blowing in the forms' – which is also termed as 'blowing of the trumpet' (*nufikha soor*) by the angel of death, Izraeel. It will be followed by the 'second blowing of the trumpet' by Israfeel.

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

“They have esteemed not God, as is His due; While the whole earth shall be in His grip on the day of judgment and the heavens rolled up (shall be) in His right hand: Hallowed Is He, and Exalted is He, high above what they associate (with Him).” (39:67)

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنْظُرُونَ

“And (when) the trumpet is blown then whoever is in the heavens and whoever is in the earth

shall swoon (die) save those whom God hath willed (to keep alive), then the trumpet shall be blown again, then lo! They shall stand up awaiting (observing the situation).” (39:68)

وَأَشْرَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ وَجِيءَ بِالنَّبِيِّينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

“And the earth shall get radiant with the light of its Lord, and the Book (of deeds) shall be set, and the prophets shall be brought up and the witnesses, and (it shall) be judged between them, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.” (39:69)

وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ

“And every soul shall be paid in full what it hath wrought, and He knoweth best what they do.” (39:70)

It will be observed significantly in the verse 39:68 quoted above that God has expressly included an exception, ‘...**except such as Allah pleases (to keep alive) ...**’

It means, there are certain beings who will not be affected by the first blowing of the trumpet and will not be subjected to a loss of consciousness, described in these verses 7:46–48 as ‘**men who know them all by their marks and dwellers on the Heights**’. They will remain in the highest cognitive state even though “**all others in the heavens and all those that on earth shall swoon**” as stated in the verse 39:68 quoted above.

From the verses of the Qur'an, it will be observed that the ‘blowing of the trumpet’ will occur twice. The ‘first blowing’ will cause a severance of all considerations and ties of kinship, which is clearly expressed.

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

“And when the trumpet is blown, there shall be no ties of kindred between them on that day, nor shall they ask one another” (23: 101)

فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“Then (those) whose scales (of good deeds) are heavy, they shall be the successful ones,” (23: 102)

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ

“And those whose scales (of good deeds) are light, they are those who shall lose their souls, abiding in hell.” (23: 103)

Yet God promises in the Qur'an the reestablishment of the ties of kinship in the form of fatherhood, motherhood, sonship, brotherhood and conjugal relationship in the life after the 'major resurrection'. This assertion is contained in the following verses:

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ

“The garden of perpetual bliss which they will enter and also the righteous among their parents, their spouses, and their offspring; and the angels shall enter unto them from every portal” (13:23)

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

“Peace (be) unto you (saying) for that ye persevered in patience! (and now) how excellent is the sequel of the eternal abode.” (13:24)

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِزْقًا قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَتُوا بِهِ مُتَشَابِهًا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

“Give thou (O' Our Apostle Muhammad) the glad tidings unto those who believe and do good deeds, that for them are gardens beneath which flow rivers, and whenever they are provided with fruits therefrom they shall say, ‘This is what we were provided with before!’ and they shall be provided with the like (of it) and for them shall he mates purified. They shall dwell therein.” (2:25)

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ

“Verily the pious ones shall be in the midst of garden and fountains;” (15:45)

ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ آمِنِينَ

“(The angels saying unto them:) Enter ye therein in peace, secure.” (15:46)

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَى سُرُرٍ مُتَقَابِلِينَ

“And We will root out whatever rancour be in their hearts, (they shall be) as brothers, on dignified

couches, face to face.” (15:47)

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُمْ مِنْ عَمَلِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ

“And those who believe and follow them their offspring in faith, We will unite them with their offspring, and We will lessen not unto them aught of their (good) deeds; Every man shall be responsible for what he hath wrought.” (52:21)

The two apparently differing situations of severance of relationship and its re-establishment have been clarified by the Holy Prophet (S) as per his comment on the verse in the following apostolic tradition:

كل حسب ونسب منقطع يوم القيامة الأحسبي ونسي

“All the distinctive considerations and ties of kinship shall be severed on the day of resurrection, except those distinctive consideration and ties of kinship established through me.”

It implies that with the ‘first blowing of the trumpet’ all the then existing forms and ties are severed; and by the ‘second blowing of the trumpet’ new forms and shapes will be given to beings and a new tie of kinship will be established. However, the ‘root’ of these ties shall be the last of the divine messengers, Muhammad (S). He, who is in the highest degree of perfection, is the first and the last of all created beings.

Therefore, after the major resurrection, the relationship or kinship of people to each other, as stated so clearly in the Qur'an will be established in accordance with the degree of their attachment to the 'root' of that 'tree", which is termed in the Qur'an as the 'good tree'.

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفُرُوعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

“Seest thou not how God setteth forth a parable? Of a good word (being) like a good tree, whose root is firm, and its branches reach to the heavens,” (14:24)

تُؤْتِي أُكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

“Yielding its fruit on every moment by the permission of its Lord. And setteth forth God parables for the people that they may reflect.” (14:25)

وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ اجْتُثَّتْ مِنْ فَوْقِ الْأَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِنْ قَرَارٍ

“And the parable of an evil word is that of an evil tree growing from the surface of the earth, it has naught of stability.” (14:26)

يُنَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ

“Establisheth God (in strength) those who believe, with the firm word in the life of this world and in the hereafter; and God leaveth the unjust ones to stray; and doeth God what He willeth. (14:27)

During the stage of total resurrection, (after the second blowing of the trumpet), there will be a series of substages wherein the hidden aspects of the action of man and other creatures will become evident to each individual and to the group to which he belongs; these aspects of the action have remained hidden from him and his group till that particular stage or the manifestation of the ultimate authority of the Absolute – the Allah is reached.

During the various substages indicated above, the individual will be hailed after the leader who had led him. The Qur'an says:

يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ فَمَنْ أُوْتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ يَقْرَءُونَ كِتَابَهُمْ وَلَا يُظَلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا

“Remember the day (of judgment) when We will summon every people in the name of their imam (leader); then whoever is given his book in his right hand, these shall read their books (with pleasure), and they shall not be dealt with (even) a shred unjustly.” (17:71)

وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

“And whosoever is blind in this (life), he shall be blind in the hereafter (also) and far more away from the (right) path.” (17:72)

The above two verses also point out the important fact that those who are spiritually blind in this world shall have a keener sense of error and blindness in the hereafter.

Then shall occur the unfolding of the individual record of actions of each individual and the record of the group to which that individual belongs, as proclaimed in the Qur'an.

وَتَرَىٰ كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَانِبَهُ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ تُدْعَىٰ إِلَىٰ كِتَابِهَا الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“And thou (O' Our Apostle Muhammad!) shalt see every people kneeling down; every people shall be called unto its book; Today ye shall be recompensed for what all ye used to do (Today your

compensation sis what you have done.)” (45:28)

هَذَا كِتَابُنَا يَنْطِقُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنْسِخُ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“This is our book that speaketh against you with justice; verily We used to record whatever ye used to do.” (45:29)

The next substage of bringing forth the external and internal witnesses of deeds is portrayed and asserted by the Qur'an in the following revelations:

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ

“And on the day when the enemies of God shall be gathered together, unto the fire, then they shall be ranked in groups” (41: 19)

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا مَا جَاءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“Until they came unto it (the hell), their ears and their eyes and their skins shall bear witness against them as to what they used to do.” (41:20)

وَقَالُوا لِمَ لَجُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

“And they will say to their skins: ‘Why witness ye against us?’. They shall say ‘who maketh everything speaks, caused us to speak, and He is who created you first and unto Him ye shall (all) be returned.’” (41:21)

وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَتِرُونَ أَنْ يَشْهَدَ عَلَيْكُمْ سَمْعُكُمْ وَلَا أَبْصَارُكُمْ وَلَا جُلُودُكُمْ وَلَكِنْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَعْلَمُ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

“And ye covered unto yourselves (merely) lest that your ears and your eyes and your skins should bear witness against you, but (it was) that ye thought that God knoweth not most of what ye did.” (41:22)

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

“And on the day when We will raise up in every people from among themselves, a witness (upon

them) and bring thee (O' Our Apostle Muhammad!) as a witness upon (all) these; and We have sent down upon thee the book (the Qur'an) explaining everything, and a guidance, and mercy, and glad tidings unto those who submit themselves (to God).” (16:89)

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

“And thus We have made you a group of middling stand that ye may be witnesses over mankind and the prophet (S) witness over you; And we did not fix the ‘qiblah’ towards which thou wert at, but that We might distinguish him who followeth the prophet, from him that turneth back upon his heels; and this was surely a hard thing for any except for those whom God hath guided; and God would not make futile your faith (in Him); verily God unto mankind is affectionate (and) merciful.” (2: 143).

فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

“Then certainly We will question those unto whom (our apostles) were sent, and certainly will We also question the sent ones.” (7:6)

فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ بِعِلْمٍ وَمَا كُنَّا غَائِبِينَ

“Then certainly We will relate to them with knowledge for We were not absent.” (7:7)

وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“And the measuring (of the deeds) that day is certain, so whomsoever's weight be heavy, those are they who shall be successful.” (7:8)

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ

“And those whose measure (of the deeds) is light, those are they whose souls suffer because of the injustice they used to do to our signs. (7:9)

The ‘middle group’ (*Ummah al-Wasta*) is not the general Muslim community; the word '*Ummah*' used here is not in the sense of a 'community', 'nation' or 'followers' etc. This word means a particular class of

people who are endowed with such requisite qualifications as God made them witness for Himself over all mankind.

Then God addresses the last of His prophet, Muhammad (S) that He is to be the witness over all these witnesses. In this manner, God clarifies the expanse of His mercy and justice, by entrusting the function of final witnessing to two groups of beings, one above the other, who are pure and perfect and nearest in communion with Him.

Further on, it will be observed that these pure and perfect beings will be made by God the distributors of the abode of bliss and hell. They will **'recognize men by their marks'** and they will be the **'occupants of the 'high place'** as already clarified before. These beings, indeed, are those who have been exempted by God's will from being subjected to swoon at the time of the final blowing of the trumpet, which is expressed in the Qur'an.

The substages, progressively, will lead to the 'stage of reckoning' as stated in the Qur'an:

وَكُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَائِرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنشُورًا

"We have tied every man's action to his neck, which We will bring forth unto him on the day of resurrection in the form of an unfolded book." (17: 13)

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا

"(It will be said unto him) Read thou thy book; Sufficeth thine own self today, as a reckoner against thee." (17: 14)

In the stage of 'Reckoning', as it is apparent from the above passages, the individual creatures are made the 'reckoners' of their own actions. There are also passages which show that God directly, or through His authorized angels and vicegerents, will perform the reckoning of actions. There are verses that ascribe the reckoning to God, using personal pronoun, in first person, plural number. Meanwhile, some other passages in the Holy Qur'an point out that God alone is the Reckoner and that He is the quickest of all reckoners.

Once, Ali ('a) was asked how God would reckon the deeds of the innumerable individuals and communities in a single moment on a single day. He replied: "In the same manner as He has been nurturing and sustaining all His creatures (as it is evident to all) in a single moment of each day".

يُحَاسِبُونَ كَمَا يُرْزُقُونَ

Therefore, whether the reckoning is ascribed to God Himself or to His authorized agents, the sense of absolute authority of the absolute One – Allah – is not in the least and in any manner impaired or affected. There is no contradiction between these two assertions: these assertions only manifest the unbounded expanse of His authority. This point can be clearly understood by other Qur'anic assertions, wherein His decrees, executed by His authorized agents, are expressly mentioned.

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“So ye slew them not, but God slew them, and thou threw not (the dust) but God threw it, that He might test the believers by a gracious trial from Him: Verily God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

(8:17)

In one of the substages during the total resurrection, the individuals shall speak to those who led them astray and those whom they had followed; there will be a confrontation which will be of no avail. The Holy Qur'an depicts this happening as follows:

وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ الضُّعَفَاءُ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قَالُوا لَوْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهْدَيْنَاكُمْ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَجْرَعْنَا أَمْ سَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِنْ مَحِيصٍ

“And they shall come forth before God all together, then shall say the weak unto those who were arrogant: ‘Verily we had been your followers, can ye therefore avert from us any part of the chastisement of God?’ They would say: ‘If God hath guided us, we too would have surely guided you; it is the same to us (now) whether we rage or we endure patiently (now) there is not for us (any) way of escape.” (14:21)

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعَدَ الْحَقُّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُصْرِخِيَّ إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

“And shall say Satan after the affair is decided: ‘Verily God promised you the promise of truth, and I gave you promises but failed to keep them to you and I had no authority over you except that I called you and ye responded unto me; so blame me not but (rather) blame your selves; I cannot be your aider (now) nor can ye be my aiders; Verily I disbelieved in your associating me with God from before; Verily the unjust ones, for them shall be a painful chastisement.” (14:22)

Despite the abovementioned 'dialogues' contained in the divine revelation, there are yet other passages that assert:

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ

“Woe on the day unto the rejectors!” (77:34)

هَذَا يَوْمٌ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ

“This is the day when they shall speak not,” (77:35)

وَلَا يُؤَدِّنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ

“And it shall not be permitted unto them so that they may offer excuses.” (77:36)

The apparent contradictory assertions will clearly be understood in the light of the fact that there are several substages on the day of major resurrection. In one of those substages none of the evildoers shall be allowed to speak or repeat their excuses. This point is very adequately dealt with by the learned and holy scholar of the fourth century Hijra, Abu Jaffar Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Babawaih of Qum; known popularly as Shaikh Sadooq in his famous treatise, entitled *I'tiqadat (The Beliefs)*

Then shall come the substage of the ‘balancing of the deeds’, which is mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ

“And We shall set up the balances of justice on the day of judgment, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the lease; and even if there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, (even that) We will bring it (into account); And sufficient are We (as) reckoners.” (21:47)

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ

“And the heaven, He did raise it high, and placed the scale (within reach).” (55:7)

أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ

“So that ye may not transgress (due) balance.” (55:8)

وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

“And maintain ye the measure with justice and fall not short in the balance.” (55:9)

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

“Indeed, We sent our apostles with clear proofs, and we sent down with them the book and the scale that people may establish themselves in justice; and We sent down iron wherein is latent (in its use) mighty power and also benefits for mankind and that God may prove who helpeth Him and his apostles in secret; Verily God is All-Strong the Ever-Prevalent.” (57:25)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدُوا وَإِنْ تَلَّوْا أَوْ تَعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

“O’ ye who believe! Do stand firmly with justice, witness for God’s sake, though it be against your own selves or your parents or your kindred, be he rich or poor, for God is closer (than you) to them both; Therefore, follow not your inclination, lest ye deviate (from the truth) and if ye swerve (from the truth) or turn aside, then verily God is All-Aware of what ye do.” (4: 135)

The above verses of the Qur’an which deal with the subject of ‘balance’ and ‘scales’ indicate that (a) everything that has been created by God is in a precise and proportionate measure, (b) for every measured thing there is a standard scale, or criterion. If it is properly applied, it enables man to apprehend that measured object, no matter how far such measured object be away from the reach of man, and (c) human attainments depend to a great extent upon proper measuring of the things created by God.

The height of human attainment and penetration through the universe can be achieved by those who have used precisely the “scale” set by Allah: thus, they have also been granted by Him the divine authority. This is referred to in the Qur’an:

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا لَا تَنْفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَانٍ

“O’ ye peoples of jinn and humans, if ye can penetrate the bounds of the heavens and the earth, then do penetrate ye through; (but) ye cannot penetrate but with (our) authority!” (55:33)

In every stage for each individual and human society, and for every aspect of creation, there shall be a ‘balance’ and ‘scale’ till the final day of judgment. This scale or balance shall inevitably be ‘infallible’. An infallible scale can be used effectively only by the All-Just and Omnipresent God, or by His infallible vicegerents, for however accurate the scale may be, if the one who attempts to use it is subject to error,

the result of the measurement cannot be precise.

Thus, according to the Qur'an there have been and there shall always be the balance and the scales for justice. The 'infallible' is commanded to measure with precision, and guide mankind with 'truth' so that man's action shall be in harmony with divine ordinance, each and everything created by God.

The Qur'an repeatedly refers to, in general, the necessity of 'balance' and prescribes it as an inevitable standard for the final measuring of all things including character, faith and all actions of human beings individually or collectively as a group.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاَنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

“O’ ye who believe! Be always upright for God, bearing witness with justice, and let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably; Act ye equitably, that is nearer to piety; fear ye God, verily God is (fully) aware of what (all) ye do.” (5:8)

The importance of the 'apostle' and the 'book' and the 'scale' is obvious from the divine revelation. They are complementary to each other and necessary for the establishment of justice and witnessing of the truth since the time man was created.

The individual's action falls within the cognizance of 'scale' from the time he becomes conscious of his 'being' which is referred to in the Qur'an:

وَلَقَدْ عَلَّمْتُمُ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَىٰ فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

“And indeed, know ye the first growth (creation), why then ye reflect not?” (56:62)

This is in reference to the origin of the individual self; that is, the first stage or state when he comes into being.

It is Adam, or every descendant of his, who is made to realize – upon his becoming conscious of his 'self' – that he has been 'caused to exist' by the 'Cause of all causes', the Infinite, the Incomprehensible, through His attribute of cherishing (*Rububiyyah*).

A 'covenant' is made between man and God; man accept the responsibility. Thus, no one will be excused on the day of resurrection for his denial of the truth. God reminds and warns man:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِن بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ ۗ شَهِدْنَا ۗ أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

“When brought forth thy Lord from the children of Adam, from their backs, their descendants and (when) made them bear witness upon their own selves (saying): ‘Am I not your Lord?’, replied they ‘Yea! We do bear witness.’ (This We did) lest ye should say on the day of judgment: ‘verily we were unaware (of this fact).’” (7: 172)

أَوْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَشْرَكَ آبَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ

Or lest ye should say: ‘Verily associated (with God) only our fathers from before (us) and we are their descendants after them (following them): wilt Thou then destroy us for what the vain doers did?’” (7: 173)

Therefore, Islam is of religion of universal justice, and the Holy Prophet of Islam and his purified successive vicegerents are presented as the scale of all scales in this world and the life hereafter until the last stage of the total resurrection on the day of judgment. It makes no difference to ascribe the function of measuring in this world or hereafter to the Absolute Infinite One (to whom belongs the sovereignty of the entire universe in the realms of creation and legislation) or to the angelic agency or to the infallible vicegerents.

All these agencies and vicegerents after all, in their actions and thoughts are completely and totally in submission to the will of God. God has indeed clearly described in the Qur'an His infallible vicegerents, the purified ones who shall inherit the Earth:

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

“And indeed, We did write in the Psalms (Zabur, given to David) after the reminder (Taurah, given to Moses), that the earth shall inherit it My righteous servants.” (21: 105)

إِنَّ فِي هَذَا لَبَلَاغًا لِقَوْمٍ عَابِدِينَ

“Verily, in this is a lesson to the people who worship (Us).” (21: 106)

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

“And We sent thee not (O' Our Apostle Muhammad!) but a mercy unto (all) the worlds.” (21: 107)

Whether the development begins with the creation of Adam or with the creation of the primal matter, the existence of the 'scale' is inevitably complementary to that of the 'right path'. The scale and the right path proceed together side by side, in every stage of development, till the last stage of resurrection, the

day of judgment.

Therefore, every individual and every community of conscious beings will be judged by God and shall be rewarded or punished. Yet, God will not finalize His judgment before the stage of 'intercession' is substantiated by those who have been bestowed by God with the authority of being witnesses over the entire creation and truth. These Witnesses of the truth, according to the 'Qur'an represent the universal grace and love of, God and are authorized to intercede and redeem the shortcomings of the people who are subordinate and attached to them.

Then comes the stage when every being will assume its final form and be placed under the final grouping:

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ

“Remember When happeneth the Event.” (56: 1)

لَيْسَ لَوْفَعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ

“There is not for its happening, any belying,” (56:2)

وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً

“And ye shall be (sorted into) three kinds.” (56:7)

فَأَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ

“Then (will be) the ‘people of the right hand’: Oh! What (a happy state shall) the ‘people of the right hand’ (be in)!” (56:8)

وَأَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ

“Then (will be) the ‘people of the left hand’: Oh! What (a wretched state shall the ‘people of the left hand’ (be in)!” (56:9)

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ

“And the ‘foremost ones’ (in faith and virtue) shall be the ‘foremost ones’ (in receiving their reward),” (56: 10)

أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ

“These are they who shall be brought nigh (unto God),” (56: 11)

جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“A recompense for what they used to do.” (56:24)

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْتِيَمًا

“They shall hear not therein any frivolity, nor any taint of sin,” (56:25)

إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا

“Save (Naught), ‘Peace (and ever) Peace’ talked of,” (56:26)

وَأَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ

“And the ‘people of the left hand’, Ah! What (a wretched state shall) the people of the left hand (be in)! (56:41)

فِي سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ

“In scorching wind and scalding water,” (56:42)

وَكَانُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى الْحِنثِ الْعَظِيمِ

“And they used to persist in sin heinous,” (56:46)

وَكَانُوا يَقُولُونَ أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ

“And they used to say: What! when we die and become dust and bones, shall we even then indeed be again raised up?” (56:47)

أَأَنْتُمْ تَخْلُقُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْخَالِقُونَ

“Is it ye that create it or are We the Creator?” (56:59)

نَحْنُ قَدَرْنَا بَيْنَكُمْ الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ

“It is We Who have decreed death among you, and We are not to be overcome.” (56:60)

عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُبَدِّلَ أَمْثَالَكُمْ وَنُنشِئَكُمْ فِي مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“To Our changing your forms and raising you in that ye know not.” (56:61)

As pointed out above, shall be three main classifications of beings on the day of judgment. One of which will be 'the foremost among the foremost ones'. This group will direct or supervise the other two groups towards their earned destination, by the permission of their Lord:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ غَلٍّ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رَسُولٌ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَنُودُوا أَنْ تَتْلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَوْ رِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“And We will remove whatever rancour be in their breast, there shall flow beneath their abodes rivers, and they will say: ‘All praise be (only) to God who guided us to this, and We would not have been guided had not God guided us; Indeed, did come the apostles of Our Lord with the truth’; and it shall be cried out unto them that: ‘(Behold!) This is the Garden of which ye are made heirs for what ye did’.” (7:43)

وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ أَنْ قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا رَبُّنَا حَقًّا فَهَلْ وَجَدْتُمْ مَا وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا قَالُوا نَعَمْ فَأَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ

“And will call out the inmates of the Garden (of paradise) unto the inmates of the (hell) fire (saying): ‘Indeed we have found what promised us Our Lord to be true; have ye too found what promised your Lord, to be true?’ They will say: ‘Yes’ Then a crier will cry out between them that ‘The curse of God is on the unjust’,” (7:44)

وَيَبْنَهُمَا حِجَابٌ وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمَاهُمْ وَنَادَوْا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ أَنْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَمْ يَدْخُلُوهَا وَهُمْ يَطْمَعُونَ

“And between the two shall be a veil and on the heights shall be men who know all by their marks, and they shall call out to the inmates of the Garden (Paradise): ‘Peace be on you,’ they shall not have yet entered it, though they do hope (thereof).” (7:46)

وَنَادَى أَصْحَابُ الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالًا يَعْرِفُونَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ قَالُوا مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْكُمْ جَمْعُكُمْ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

“And will call the occupants of the heights unto the inmates of the Hell, whom they will recognize by their marks; They will say: ‘Of no avail had been your amassing and what ye used to act proudly.’” (7:48)

أَهْلَؤَالَى الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمْتُمْ لَا يَنَالُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَنتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ

“(Behold ye!) Are these they whom ye swear that God will bestow not His mercy on them? Enter ye into the Garden (Paradise!) No fear shall be on you, nor shall ye grieve.” (7:49)

الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَهْوًا وَلَعِبًا وَغَرَّتَهُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فَالْيَوْمَ نَنسَاهُمْ كَمَا نَسُوا لِقَاءَ يَوْمِهِمْ هَذَا وَمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ

“(Those) Who made their religion a pastime and play, and whom the life of the world hath deceived. So today We neglect them as they did neglect this day of theirs, as they did deny Our Signs,” (7:51)

It is clearly understood from the divine revelations that the ‘foremost of the foremost ones’ are indeed those who shall be the distributors of Paradise and Hell; and they are referred to in the divine revelation as ‘the dwellers of the most elevated places’, ‘men who know all by their marks’, ‘witnesses of truth’ and the ‘vicegerents of God on earth’. Their ultimate companionship with us is asserted by the Qur’an:

وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا

“And whoever obeyeth God and the Apostle (Muhammad) these shall be with those, on whom God hath bestowed favours of the Prophets, and the Truthful, and the Witnesses and the Righteous ones, and excellent are these as companions!” (4:69)

Before giving the details of the persons who have been given the authority by God to intercede, the following clarification will have to be noted.

a) The Qur'an repeatedly asserts that no intercession forwarded by any created being shall be accepted by God.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعُ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

“O’ ye who believe! Spend (in alms) out of what We have provided you with ere the day cometh wherein there shall be no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession; and those who disbelieve, they are the unjust.” (2:254)

وَأَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْ يُحْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

“And warn thou with it, the Qur’an those who fear that they shall be gathered unto their Lord (thinking that) there shall not be for them, besides Him, any guardian or an intercessor, so that they may guard (themselves against evil).” (6:51)

b) Those who have learned on false support and relied on such intercession shall come to grief and will be completely disillusioned on the day of resurrection when the final judgment will take place. Their plight is portrayed in the Qur'an.

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأْوِيلَهُ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلَهُ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِنْ قَبْلِ قَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَهَلْ لَنَا مِنْ شُفَعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ قَدْ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ

“Do they wait for aught but the final sequel? On the day when its sequel comes about, those who neglected it before will say: ‘Indeed, came the apostle of our Lord with truth; are there for us (now) any intercessors that they may intercede for us? Or could we be sent back so that we might act other than what we did act?’ Indeed, they have lost their souls, and what they forged hath gone away from them” (7:53)

وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فُرَادَىٰ كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَتَرَكْتُمْ مَا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ وَمَا نَرَىٰ مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ فِيكُمْ شُرَكَاءَ لَقَدْ تَقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْكُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ

“And indeed ye come to Us (bare and) alone as We created you at first, and ye have left behind your backs what We bestowed on you, and We see not with you your intercessors, those whom ye asserted that they were, in your affairs the associates (of God): and indeed are now severed

the ties between you, and hath gone away from you what ye (falsely) asserted.” (6:94)

c) God clarifies the intercessors whose intercession shall not prevail, and also those for whom there shall be no intercession by any other intercessors as well.

أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ شُفَعَاءَ قُلُوبَهُمْ أَوْ لَوْ كَانُوا لَا يَمْلِكُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ

“Or have they taken intercessors other than God” Say thou: “What! Even though they have no power over anything, nor do they understand.” (39:43)

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْأَزْفَةِ إِذِ الْقُلُوبُ لَدَى الْحَنَاجِرِ كَاطْمِينٍ مَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ وَلَا شَفِيعٍ يُطَاعُ

“And (thou) warn them, then, of the approaching Day, when. (men’s) hearts shall rise up to their throats, choking: For the unjust shall not have any compassionate friend nor an intercessor who shall be heard.” (40: 18)

Now, it is evident that the intercession of those who are not given any authority or power shall not prevail, as they lack might and knowledge. It is also clear that those for whom no intercession shall prevail are the unjust ones. The divine revelations proceed further to assert that the intercession of those who are chosen by God, and specially permitted, authorized and even covenanted by Him to do so, shall be accepted by God.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

“God! There is no God but He, the (Ever) Living the self-subsistent. Slumber seizeth Him not nor sleep; His it is whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth; Who is he that can intercede with Him but with His permission; He knows what is before them and what is behind them, while they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge save that which He willeth, His Throne extendeth over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both, tireth Him not, And He is the Most High and the Most Great.” (2:255)

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مَا مِنْ شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

“Verily, Your Lord is God Who created the heavens and the earth in six days (terms) and is firmly

established on 'Arsh'. He regulateth everything; No intercessor can there be, save after His leave: This is God, your Lord, Therefore Him (alone) worship ye, What! Will ye not then mind?" (10:3)

إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا إِنَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ بِالْقِسْطِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ

"Unto Him shall return ye all; (this is) the promise of God in truth: Verily, (it is only) He (who) beginneth the creation, then causeth it to return that He may with equity recompense those who believe and do good; and those who disbelieve, for them shall be the drink from that boiling fluids and a chastisement painful for those who disbelieve." (10:4)

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ ارْتَضَىٰ وَهُمْ مِنْ خَشْيَتِهِ مُشْفِقُونَ

"Knoweth He what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot intercede a bit for him whom he approveth, and they, of His fear, tremble." (21:28)

These specific beings, to whom God has granted permission and authority to intercede, are described by Him as the ones 'whose word God is pleased with'.

يَوْمَئِذٍ لَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَاعَةُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَرَضِيَ لَهُ قَوْلًا

"On that day shall avail not intercession (of any) save (that of) whom hath permitted God, and whose word He is pleased with." (20:109)

There is yet another verse which clarifies the above verse by explaining what is meant by the 'word' with which God is pleased.

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا

"On the day whereon shall stand the spirit and the angels arrayed, they shall speak not save he whom the beneficent God giveth leave, who spoke (only) the truth." (78:38)

The divine revelation proceeds onwards to describe the qualifications of those who are – by the permission and authority from God – the intercessors with Him on the day of resurrection for the final judgment. The following verse of the Qur'an asserts two of the qualifications, being witnesses of the 'truth' and being the 'knowledge with certitude'.

وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

“And those whom they call besides Him, own not any power of intercession, save he who beareth witness of the truth, and they know (the truth).” (43:86)

It has, already been explained earlier, when discussing the 'middle group'² that the witness over mankind is the 'middle group', and the Holy Prophet is the witness over them and that the word 'ummah' used in this verse does not mean the general Muslim community. This point is clarified by God in the Qur'an.

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ

“And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with certain words then he fulfilled them; He said, 'Verily I make thee Imam for mankind,' (Abraham) said 'And my offspring'? He said: 'My covenant reacheth not the unjust.'” (2: 124)

Then Ibrahim prayed:

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

“Our Lord! Make us (two) Muslims submitting (only) to Thee and of our progeny (make) a group submissive (only) to Thee and show us the ways of devotion and turn to us (mercifully) for verily Thou and Thou (alone) art the Oft-returning, the Most Merciful.” (2: 128)

This is the prayer of Ibrahim for himself and his progeny, after he was declared an Imam (leader) by God, and the word 'Ummah' is applied to them. Thus does one verse of the Qur'an clarify the other verse. It is clear that the word 'Ummah' (group) used here is identical with the other word imam or leader.

Ummah (group) here does not mean the 'led' but it obviously means the Imam (leader or Guide). This middle group of entities, *Ummah al-Muslim*, are indeed distinguished with the quality of leading mankind towards the 'right path' (*Sirat al-Mustaqim*).

Having clarified these points, the divine revelation proceeds in identifying the two, the 'Witness of Truth' and the 'Muslim Group' (*Ummah al-Muslimah*) of Ibrahim's progeny for whom he prayed. The Qur'an asserts:

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

“And fight (endeavour) ye in (the way of) God as it behoveth you to fight (endeavour) for Him; He hath chosen you and hath laid not upon you any hardship in religion; The faith of your Father Abraham: He (God Himself) named you Muslims before and in this, that the apostle may be a witness over you and ye be a witness over the people; So establish ye prayer and pay ye the poor-rate and hold ye fast by God; He is your Master – How Excellent the Master and How Excellent the Helper.” (22:78)

When God had appointed 'Ummah al-Wasta' intercessors, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) was declared by Him 'the intercessor of intercessors' (*Ashfa'ush-Shifa'ah*).

These intercessors have been chosen by God. They are permitted and authorized by God to intercede; they have been described, and their qualifications defined clearly in the divine revelation. Earlier in the discussion on 'prophethood' and 'divine guidance and leadership' (*Nubuwat and Imamah*) the Qur'anic verses on the law of divine selection (*Istifa*) and the divine endowment have been explained.

God Himself chooses the intercessors and endows them with the permission to intercede:

وَكَمْ مِنْ مَلَكٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ لَا تُغْنِي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئاً إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ يَأْذَنَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَرْضَى

“And how many an angel in the heavens are whose intercession is of no avail at all save after that permitteth God whosoever willeth He and chooseth.” (53:26)

Some of the descriptions and definitions given in the Qur'an to recognize the intercessors are that they shall be the best of the Group, the foremost in Goodness and the Middle group (or the perfectly balanced) Group *Ummah al-Wasta*. To quote yet another verse of the Qur'an:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ إِذِنَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ

“Then made We the inheritors of the Book (Qur'an) those whom choose We from among our servants; and of them is he who causeth himself to suffer a loss, and of them is he who followeth the middle course, and of them is he who is the foremost in goodness by God's permission: This is that which is the greatest excellence.” (35:32)

The intercessors have been kept away from all physical and spiritual uncleanness by God and purified by Him with the utmost extent of purification.

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيراً

“And stay ye in your abodes and display not your finery like the display of the ignorance of yore and establish ye prayer and give away the poor-rate, and obey God and His apostle; Verily, verily God intendeth but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness O’ ye the people of the house and purify you (with) a thorough purification.” (33:33)

These purified persons have been in communion with the word of God, the Qur’an, from its primordial state all along; and shall remain so beyond its historical state of revelation. The Qur’an asserts:

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِمَوَاقِعِ النُّجُومِ

“But nay! I wear by the setting of the stars,” (56:75)

وَإِنَّهُ لَقَسَمٌ لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ

“and verily, it is a great oath if ye only knew it.” (56:76)

إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ

“Verily it is Qur’an honourable.” (56:77)

فِي كِتَابٍ مَكْنُونٍ

“In a book hidden,” (56:78)

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ

“Toucheth it not, save the purified ones.” (56:79)

تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Sent down by the Lord of the worlds,” (56:80)

The Holy Prophet (S) reiterates in his famous authentic tradition of ‘the two weighty entities’:

نَبِي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ التَّفْلِينَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَعِثَ رَبِّي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي مَا إِنْ تَسْتَكْتُمُ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي أَبَدًا أَفَانَهَا لَنْ يَفْتَرَقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَى الْحَوْضِ

“I am leaving amongst you two weighty things, one of which is greater than the other. These are, the Book of Almighty Allah and my progeny. So, take care how you treat them after me. The twain shall never part company until they come to me at the Pool [of Kawthar].”³

Therefore, the imams or the house of the Holy Prophet (S) are the intercessors besides the Holy Prophet (S) himself and his daughter, Fatimah (‘a). These purified and divinely selected persons are identified with the Holy Prophet and are distinguished from all mankind by God with great force in the Qur’an.

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ

“And unto him who disputeth with thee therein after the knowledge hath come unto thee, say! (O’ Our apostle Muhammad, (say unto them)! ‘Come ye, let us summon our sons, and (ye summon) your sons, and (we summon) our women and (ye) your women, and (we summon) ourselves and (ye) yourselves and then let us invoke and lay the curse of God on the liars!’” (3:61)

'Our women' are represented by Fatimah (‘a), the only daughter of the Holy Prophet; 'our sons' are his two grandsons, Hasan and Al-Husayn (‘a); 'our selves' are represented by 'the selves' of the Holy Prophet and as identified by God, ‘Ali (‘a), who happened to be the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad (S).

This verse was revealed on the occasion of the historic encounter with a group of Christians (*Mubahala*). There are also apostolic traditions bearing witness to this fact referred to in the divine revelation in connection with the great historical event in the life of the Holy Prophet (S):

أَنَا وَ عَلِيٌّ مِنْ نُورٍ وَاحِدٍ

“I and Ali are from one light”

فَاطِمَةُ بَضْعَةٌ مِنِّي

“Fatimah is part of myself.”

Finally, God has made covenant with these divinely selected and purified persons, and has promised them, as befits His divine justice and mercy, the right of intercession. This promise is in return for the fulfillment of their part of the covenant. The Qur’an states as follows:

لَا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا

“They shall own not any intercession, save he who hath taken a promise from the Beneficent (God to do so)” (19:87)

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

“This is the promise of God! Faileth not God His promise, but most people know not (this).” (30:6)

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ

“Is the recompense for good aught but good?” (55:60)

To have a full grasp of the collective value of the human life and the inter-relation of the members of human society in the life here and that of the hereafter, the problem of intercession is further elaborated below.

1) Every finite being – in itself, and by itself – is in need of all excellences. Whatever excellence he possesses in any stage of existence, it owes to the ‘Absolute, Infinite Perfect One’. It is a gift of God granted to him. Need, defect and destitution – in short, the absence of perfection – is an inherent property of finite beings. These inherent shortcomings are constantly covered by a continuous blessing by the Absolute Perfect One.

Each finite being receives the divine gift that covers his inherent shortcomings according to the capacity of his recipiency. Thus:

- a. As God is the Absolute Redeemer, Deliverer and Intercessor, He covers by His continuous gifts the shortcomings of all finite beings in accordance with their capacity of demand and supplication. There is no exception to this principle of ‘absolute redeeming authority’ of God over His creatures. The highest finite being as well as the lowest one (in perfection), as mere creatures, is not free from the inherent shortcomings and destitution, and so they are not needless of His gift, grace and blessing.
- b. No redeeming power and salvation can be exercised by a lower finite being over a higher finite one; and thus, a comparatively imperfect person cannot redeem the defects of another imperfect one who is higher in the hierarchy of limited perfection. Nor can the one who is of the same level of imperfection redeem the defects of the another.

c. Redemption, salvation, blessing and grace all proceed as a gift from the Absolute Giver, direct and through the agencies of higher finite beings to the lower ones. Whatever blessings and grace, received by the lower group through the agencies of the higher one, are termed as the intercession of the divinely authorized agents in redeeming the defect and covering the shortcomings of the lower group. Thus, it is true that there is no intercession to secure salvation in any stage of existence in this life or that in the hereafter except of God and of those finite beings of higher stage of perfection who are witnesses of truth and have knowledge of the facts as authorized agents of God.

2) To those schools of thought that value religion as a mere bond and relation between the individual and the Creator, every individual is responsible for his own ultimate salvation or condemnation through his action. On this ground, the theory of *dharma* and *Karma*, transmigration and rebirth was formed in order to secure the ultimate salvation for individuals through the process of rebirth as a purgatory and intermediate stages of punishment and reward till one was totally purified from the consequences of his evil deeds and was absorbed in the Absolute Perfect One.

On this ground, another school of thought sought to secure the ultimate salvation for man by considering absolute, arbitrary and autocratic right of rewarding and punishing them for God. Whomsoever He wills, will be sent to Heaven or Hell, disregarding their good and bad deeds. To this effect, a mystic idea was also developed and presented in the following lines of Hafiz:

ترسم که روز حشر عنان بر عنان رود

تسبیح شیخ و خرفته و نار شراب خوار

All these doctrines are contrary to what the Qur'an asserts repeatedly that the learned and the ignorant, the honest and the dishonest, the virtuous and the mischievous, the righteous and the wicked ones shall not and cannot be treated as equals in requital.

The Christian doctrine of salvation also presents a similar tendency, as indicated above. According to this doctrine, Jesus Christ will secure the salvation for those who believe in his being a divine incarnation and son of God and his crucifixion and resurrection. This is quite illogical. The author dealt with this subject in his treatise '*Introduction to the Qur'an*'

According to Islam, every individual is held responsible for his wrong or right deeds. The Qur'an has asserted that "**whosoever does a bit of good shall see and whosoever does a bit of wrong shall see**". Yet, the life of man is not to be valued only from an individual point of view. Nor is the religion to

be considered as merely a link between individuals and the Creator.

The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of the social aspect of not only the human life, but of every part and particle of the whole universe in relation with each other. It presents God as the Lord Cherisher of all worlds – whose grace and mercy have pervaded all and encompassed the whole and every part according to its merit – and considers the same Lord Cherisher of all as the Master of the day on which all will return and be judged and requited.

As such, 'He' presents the whole realm of creation as one inter-related 'theme' that owes obedience and absolute submission to none but Him alone, and no assistance is to be sought from anyone else. Thus, as a member of a theme, in offering prayer in submission to Him and beseeching help from Him, everyone has to say 'We' instead of 'I', converting individual value into a social one.

Everyone, in his continuous movement towards Him, needs to pray for Guidance on the right path not as an individual traveller but as a member of the abovementioned theme, beseeching His guidance to the 'right path' for the theme, and to save it from falling short or exceeding the prescribed limits.

Evaluating religion in this social perspective proves:

(a) the necessity of the existence of inter related hierarchy of beings, led by the topmost finite being in perfection, who beseeches Allah's blessings for himself and every member of the theme that he is leading, and receiving blessings from Him (Allah) for himself and all those who follow him in their obedience and prayer,

(b) the success or failure, and deeds or misdeeds of every member of the theme in some way or the other affect the well-being or pain of the other members of the theme,

(c) the significance of the Islamic directive about the effect of offerings of the posterity in reducing the evil consequences of the misdeeds or shortcomings of their predecessors or vice versa.

Though death and length of time has separated the ancestors from the posterity, the ties of faith, mutual love of God and of the godly persons are so firm and communicative that makes one feel and enjoy the offerings of the others for him; or to feel pain and sorrow for the shortcomings and failure of one another.

In short, the whole universe which is in obedience to His will and receiving blessings from Him looks like a congregational prayer that ought to be conducted by an Imam who will pray on behalf of all for all and receive blessings from Him and diffuse these among all. The ties between members of the theme are nothing but the reciprocal faith and love.

This permanent faith and love shall make each member of the theme divert his attention from his individual defects and shortcomings to the perfection and attainments of the society to that he belongs. An individual might have a defect or may have done a wrong for which he could suffer punishment and pain. These could be averted by directing his attention with love and faith towards the perfection of the

higher members.

In this temporary life, the person who is extremely worried about some mishap will try to divert his attention from it to a pleasing scene. So long as the attention is towards this pleasant scene, he will not feel the consequent sorrow of the mishap. This diversion is temporal and temporary, but in the life hereafter the diversion caused by sincere faith and real love will be forever.

Thus, a sinner who is faithful and who enjoys the love of perfect servants of God will enjoy their perfection and is blessed not by his own actions, but by theirs.

قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا

“Say thou (O’ Our apostle Muhammad!): I ask ye not aught of any recompense (for my ministry) save that he, who will, take the way unto his Lord!” (25:57)

ذَٰلِكَ الَّذِي يُبَشِّرُ اللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَمَنْ يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حُسْنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ

“That is of which giveth God the glad tidings unto His servants who believe and do good deeds; Say thou (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!): I demand not of you any recompense for it (the toils of the apostleship) save the love of (my) relatives; and whosoever earneth good, We increase for him good therein, verily God Is Oft-Forgiving, the Most Grateful (One).” (42:23).

Thus, the Qur'anic passages assert that the love (*Mawaddat*) of those who are nearer to God in perfection will avail those who are willing to find their way towards the absolute perfect one.

This is the love that prompts one to expand the limits of his ego, as to be united with those whose ego is next to God in universality and all-pervasiveness. On the other hand, the Qur'an warns the unjust, the liars and the mischievous – in short, the wrong-doers and disbelievers – against the painful consequences of the curse of God, angels and the people (believers).

The Qur'an asserts this social aspect of human life in the following verse:

مَا خَلَقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعَثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ

“Your creation and resurrection are nothing but that of a single soul.” (31:28)

From this Qur'anic declaration of treating men in their creation and resurrection as a single unit, the social value of human life and the importance of the existence of a balancing power and entity becomes

so obvious that any attempt to separate religion from social and political aspect of the human life becomes not only meaningless but also anti-human.

According to the Qur'an the social and political problems of human life are the most sacred and topmost concern of religious directives, it is in this sense that Islam is said to be a socio-political religion, which places emphasis on the importance of the leadership (*Imamah*) and *Khilafat* as the great message or God to be delivered to mankind.

Creation and resurrection cannot be considered as a single unit without the existence of a perfect man as medium between the Creator and creatures to keep up the balance between the members of the theme in their rights and duties towards the Creator. As such, the question of *Imamah* or *Qiyamah* is so interrelated that they should be treated as one.

Heaven And Hell

In discussing life in the hereafter, we have already described the various stages through which the souls have to pass.

1. In short, the Day of Judgment is followed by leading individuals and groups to their permanent abode, Paradise or Hell, Heaven or Abyss.⁴ The number of states, and stages within the respective states, in between the two extremes are known to Him alone.⁵
2. According to the Qur'an, the states of life hereafter are not known and cannot be exactly known to us in this world, as we are still fettered with terrestrial conditions and limitation of the sensory, perceptual and conceptual abilities.⁶ Whatever that has been presented to us about the life beyond the present one – through revelation – is merely a diminished figurative presentation of the realities of the life hereafter in terms that could be understood by us.
3. Our present mental faculty is too limited and underdeveloped to realize the real objects of pleasure and pain of the life in the hereafter. Our mental attitude in relation to the objects of life hereafter is like the mental attitude of a person born blind or deaf, who cannot perceive and appreciate the pleasant and unpleasant objects of sight or hearing. To such a person, the object of sight and hearing is to be presented in terms of the object of other senses such as the sense of smelling, taste and touch.

4. All that we need to believe is that in the stage of total resurrection, the present earth will be transformed into a different one, and all the heavens will be rolled up and folded (meaning the disappearance of present distances) by the right hand of God (meaning His Heavenly Might). And that earth will be illuminated not by the light of the sun but by the light of its Lord Cherisher. The records of the various aspects and stages of the lives of individuals and groups preserved by the divine agencies will be brought into light. All the prophets and witnesses will be brought to the scene. After the scene is over, and grouping and intercession are finalized, each individual and group will be led to their permanent abode, either Heaven or Hell or the states in between.

5. According to the Qur'an human mental faculties and senses are not destroyed by death, but all will develop into a more refined condition, and sharper in terms of sensitiveness. As such, in their permanent abode all the pleasant or painful objects of the mental faculty – from the sense of touch to the highest peak of intellectual realization – should be presented in some form or other, and they should be in utter correspondence with the conditions of the highly developed faculties. Therefore, the repeated description of the condition and objects of paradise and hell in physical terms understandable to our mental faculties at present means nothing but emphatic assertion of the fact that death is not the destruction but development and evolution in more refined conditions which are at present beyond our imagination.

The Qur'an encourages the believers to race in competition towards the grace and mercy of their Lord Cherisher, which are awaiting them, and towards the Paradise, which is so spacious that its extent is equal to that of the entire earth and heavens, which has been prepared for the pious ones. It is obvious that such an extensive paradise cannot be enjoyed but by the person whose extent of perceptual faculty is so great that it can encompass it. Similarly, the painful objects of hell are immensely horrible and tormenting due to the refined conditions of the sensation and the highly developed power of the conducive means.

In short, paradise and hell, the pleasant and painful objects there, the conditions of enjoyment or sufferings of their inhabitants, all are real and true in the exact sense of reality and truth as presented to us in the terms of similitude so that we may be able to imagine and have a faint glimpse of the life hereafter. Every word and description given in the holy book or stated by the infallible vicegerents of God should be taken as an absolute fact. According to the Qur'an this temporal life and its objects of pleasure and pain are

nothing, but child–play in comparison to the life hereafter and abode wherein everything is living in the real sense of life:

وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهُوٌّ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

“And nothing is this life of the world but a vain sport and play; and verily the abode of the hereafter, is certainly the life; if they but know.” (29:64)

The life here and the objects which appeal to our senses and our conceptual faculties are unreal and are merely an imitation of the realities of the worlds yonder and a far diminished image and figurative presentation of those realities.

1. Bihar Al–Anwar, Al–Allamah Al–Majlisi, Part 58, Page 7.

2. Refer to the Holy Qur’an, 2: 143.

3. This Hadith has been narrated with slight variations and present in many books of Ahadith. Sunni Sources:

According to the book Hadith Al–Thaqalayn Wa Maqamat Ahl Al–Bayt, the hadith has been narrated by 25 companions of the Prophet (s) in Sunni sources, some of which are:

– Zayd b. Arqam: the hadith of thaqalayn is narrated with 6 chains of narration from him in the books: Sunan an–Nasa’i, al–Mu’jam al–kabir, Sunan al–Tirmidhi, Mustadrak al–Hakim, Musnad Ahmad.[8]

– Zayd b. Thabit: in Musnad Ahmad and al–Mu’jam al–kabir.

– Jabir b. ‘Abd Allah: in Sunan al–Tirmidhi, al–Mu’jam al–kabir, and al–Mu’jam al–awsat.

– Hudhayfa b. Usayd: in al–Mu’jam al–kabir

– Abu Sa’id al–Khudri: in Musnad Ahmad and Du’afa’ al–kabir.

– Imam ‘Ali (a): with 2 chains of narrators in al–Bahr al–zikhar and Kanz al–‘Ummal.

– Abu Dharr al–Ghifari: in al–Mu’talaf wa al–Mukhtalaf.

– Abu Hurayra: in Kashf al–astar ‘an zawa’id al–bazar.

– ‘Abd Allah b. Hantab: in Usd al–ghaba.

– Jubayr b. Mut’im: in Zilal al–Janna.

Al–Bahrani, the author of Ghayat al–maram wa hujjat al–khisam, narrated the hadith from 39 chains of narrations from Sunni authors. According to the book, the hadith is narrated in Musnad Ahmad, Sahih Muslim, Manaqib Ibn al–Maghazili, Sunan al–Tirmidhi, al–‘Umda Tha’labi, Musnad Abi Ya’li, al–Mu’jam al–awsat, al–‘Umda Ibn al–Bitriq, Yanabi’ al–mawadda, al–Tara’if, Fara’id al–simatayn, and the commentary on Nahj al–balagha by Ibn Abi al–Hadid.

Shi’a Sources:

According to Ghayat al–maram wa hujjat al–khisam, in Shi’a sources 82 hadiths are narrated with the content of the hadith of thaqalayn, in many books such as: Usul al–kafi, Kamal al–din, al–Amali (al–Saduq), al–Amali (al–Mufid), al–Amali (al–Tusi), ‘Uyun akhbar al–Ridha (a), al–Ghayba (al–Nu’mani), Basa’ir al–darajat. [Note by Al–Islam.org].

4. Refer to the Holy Qur’an, 39:67–75.

5. Refer to the Holy Qur’an, 17:21.

6. Refer to the Holy Qur’an, 56:60–62.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Appendix 1: The Invisible World

Note: This is the first of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.

In the last part of this treatise, the frivolity of the temporal world in comparison to the world beyond was exposed. The temporal world means the physical world and the surroundings which appeal to our external senses, the perceptibility of which is very limited. One should have faith in the unseen realms of existence to which the Holy Qur'an describes as

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ

“...those who believe in the unseen...” (2:3)..

This is the basis of all fundamental articles of faith. In view of this faith, none can deny the possibility of the existence of the regions and realms – within the terrestrial folds or beyond them – populated with living beings of various forms, faculties and functions. As asserted by the Qur'an and based on the statements of the infallible vicegerents God, what appeals to our senses is in the lowest region of existence, '*dunya*' (دنيا) which is child's play in comparison to the realms beyond it.

When the Qur'an consider the stars-filled region visible to our senses as the lowest heaven, one can imagine what would be the scale of the heavens beyond the lowest one. Even in the folds of the stars-filled territory, there are regions unperceivable by our external senses. Modern scientific devices are gradually detecting the possibility of the existence of invisible matter surrounding our space and beyond it.

The infallible saints gifted with divine means of knowledge had already confirmed the abovementioned 'hidden worlds' with which they were in communication. While Islam discourages people from believing in the world of superstition, it is not sensible for us to rely merely on our limited senses and deny the existence of the invisible world of different nature, functioning in the administration of the universe. The stories of *jinn*s, evil and good spirits, angels and accomplished personalities in invisible form such as Ilyas, Hidzr, Abdals and above all the twelfth imam of the house of the prophet, whose jurisdiction of domination encompasses the visible and the unseen worlds are all confirmed by the religion of Islam.

Therefore, instead of narrowing the extent of our knowledge about the visible beings, one should try to expand and develop one's power of perception to discover the unseen.

There are many prescribed ways of spiritual developments which are not in conformity with Islamic

principles. They may be misleading and harmful. Therefore, in every stage of spiritual progress one should be very cautious not to deviate even a bit from the prescribed moral code of Islam given by the infallible persons (*ma'soomeen*) and handed down to us through the divine scholars.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Appendix 2: Rahmatu Lil-'Alameen (The Universal Grace)

رحمة للعلمين

Note: *This is the second of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.*

In order to understand the extent of our intellectual limitations, the person, the significance of the name and the connotations of the description, the following Qur'anic points should be borne in mind.

1) According to the Qur'an, the process of creation is circular:

كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ

***"...as He brought you forth (in the beginning) so unto Him shall ye also return."* (7:29)**

It is in the sense that it ends at the point where it started from. This view is common to both the atheists and theists alike. The difference between the two opposite schools is that the atheist thinks that matter, space and time or something presentable in terms of four dimensions as the point wherefrom the process starts and at which it also ends.

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ

***"And they say there is naught (wherein) save our life in this world; we die and live, and destroyeth us not but time..."* (45:24)**

From the atheistic point of view, matter – the least in degree and in state of perfection, and in its most chaotic condition – is held as the beginning and the end of the whole accidental, purposeless developments, called the process of creation. Whereas from the theistic point of view the system begins with the highest in degree and state of perfection proceeding downward to the matter, which is the least in degree of perfection, and again turns back upward to the point, from where it had started

قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

“...Say: verily, we are God’s and verily unto Him shall we return.” (2: 156)

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

“What! do you then think that We created you in vain, and that ye shall not be returned unto Us?” (23: 115)

يُدَبِّرُ الْأُمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِمَّا تَعُدُّونَ

“He regulates (all) the affairs from the heaven down to the earth, then shall it ascend unto Him in a day the measure of which is a thousand years of what ye reckon.” (32:5)

The process is designed and administered by the creative Will (that is, the intention) of the Absolute and Infinite Real One. The Universal Grace and Justice are a *Priori* factor manifested in His Will and Intention. Grace and Justice are not different attributes, as held by some schools of thought; they are two different aspects of His universal love.

Grace means to give out sheer love without expecting return and justice means ‘He’ keeps everything in its proper place and according to merit, so that the system should function as one harmonious unit representing the absolute unity of its Creator and Administrator. Thus, in this sense grace and justice are always interrelated so far as the Creator is concerned. Whatever ‘He’ gives is out of sheer love but in accordance with the merit and appropriateness of the state of the receiver.

2. Taking the system as a manifestation of His Grace and Justice, the order of creation begins with the highest non-physical and most comprehensive created entity, who is foremost in having within his fold all the excellences which are to be unfolded in the chain of beings next to him in grades and spheres. They follow one another according to their degree of comprehensiveness and perfection. The created entity, being the most comprehensive in perfection, cannot be but one in number and of non-material and intellectual nature.

He is presented in various terms, but the most appropriate one is ‘Muhammad’ in its true adjectival

sense. From him the downward order of intellectual and angelical beings begins. This unique created unit is followed by spheres of beings who are lesser in the degree of comprehensiveness, but larger in number.

Thus, the order of created beings or the order of the manifestations of His Creative Will starts from the one and the most comprehensive intellectual entity, unfolding itself in innumerable spheres of intellectual and angelical beings. They are termed in the Qur'an as '*malakoot*' (ملكوت) or the realms of unseen active spiritual and psychic entities, having two aspects of holding and being held.

Each sphere is held by the one above it and is holding the sphere below it, till it ends in the four-dimension sphere termed as matter or material being.

This is the lowest sphere that is held, and it has no holding faculty at all. So, it is termed in the Qur'an as '*Alam al-Mulk*' (علم الملك) or '*Alam ash-Shahadat*' (علم الشهادات) the held-world or seen-world. It forms the base of the hierarchy, the top of which is the first and the most perfect and comprehensive entity, the one that holds all the spheres next to it and is held by nothing, but the Absolute, Whose Hand (or Might - ياد، يمين، قبضة) has the hold over everything, and nothing has any hold on 'Him'.

The base has nothing of actual or creative in it, but it is endowed with unlimited potentiality and recipiency which forms the background of its upward and gradual evolutionary movement. As such, it also becomes the ground for another upward hierarchy parallel to the downward one. This gradual evolutionary movement, according to the Qur'an is actualized by the creative Will of God through the agencies of the downward order of intellectual and angelical entities.

3. Thus matter in its evolutionary upward course begins with the simplest form of particles of atom and proceeds towards the formation of atoms into nebula and solar system, populated with inanimate and animate objects - plants, animals, man or other conscious and intellectual beings of various species - the nature and number of whom the Creator alone knows. So far as the terrestrial globe in which we live is concerned, the last and the most complicated and the highest intellectual entity into which matter has developed through the aforesaid divine agencies is 'man'. Adam (man) being the highest in the hierarchy of the earthly beings is endowed and gifted according to 'his merit with the power of expression (بيان) or power of discovery and invention.

On the one hand man is gifted with the power to receive through his external and internal senses all that is manifested by His Will in various spheres - terrestrial, celestial and super-celestial - and on the other hand, to reflect and reproduce all that he has received. So far as the earth is concerned, it is man only and no other earthly being that is endowed with this faculty.

4. According to the Qur'an the quantity of matter which carried the potentiality for the distinct form which is termed 'humanity', was protected by the Creative Will of the Absolute against all hostile conditions that would destroy the aforesaid potentiality. Under such environment did the first man appear on the scene of the evolutionary course of creation on the earth. This man and his partner were lodged, as the

evolutionary course would require, in the lowest paradise of animal comfort, having their animal requirements met with no effort.

But with those latent potentialities of representing the divine names to other created beings and representing all those beings and their needs to the Creator, man had to come out of that animal stage of comfort designed and willed by God and shoulder the hardship of responsible life. Thus, man's coming out of the Paradise of animal comfort with his partner was no fall or drawback. It meant coming out of individual, selfish and irresponsible life and entering social empathy and responsible life.

This was the step that forms the basic impulse to develop all the material and spiritual aptitudes which Adam and his issues were endowed with. It was a progressive step towards all that he and his issues had and will have to achieve in manifesting in themselves all the divine excellences.

5) Adam's coming out of the lower paradise, resulting in the material sufferings, which he and his issues have undergone is a loss in the eyes of Satan, the satanic forces and those whose object of life is only material gain. To those whose aim and object of life is to establish communication with the higher sphere of beings and ultimately make their mind and heart the focus of the will and intention of the Absolute One, Adam's coming out of paradise was a primal, necessary step towards progress. It was a gain for those who would pursue the prescribed guidance of the Creator.

It was an attempt without which Adam and his chosen issues would not be able to secure the representative status of the divine vicegerency on the earth. Adam as the first vicegerent of God was the top in the hierarchy of earthly beings, but to complete the circle and establish communion with the first created entity, he was the base for the hierarchy of his accomplished issues. They in turn had to develop spheres of perfect entities, one above the other, higher in grade though less in number.

The hierarchy had to reach its possible height by having the most accomplished one on its zenith to focalize all the excellences which were folded in the first created entity in the downward hierarchy and were unfolded in various spheres of beings next to him.

6. By specific mental and intellectual faculties, man is distinguished from the other living beings. But to achieve the final goal of evolutionary course, Adam and his chosen issues have been gifted with the distinct faculty of direct communion or communication with the various angelical spheres, termed as revelation or inspiration (وهي، إلهام). These chosen men, though all are blessed and honoured with the status of vicegerency of the Absolute One, yet differ from each other in degree and the limitation of their respective jurisdiction,

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ

“These apostles, We have exalted some of them above the others, among them are they to whom Allah spoke, and some of them He exalted by (many degrees of) rank...” (2:253)

The last and the topmost among them is the one whose soul has been made to be directly in communion with the first intellectual entity. This means the return of the system of creation to the point where it was started from. As such the circle is completed through two arcs – one is descent from the Absolute One down to the extremely imperfect four dimensional many and the other is to turn upwards, forming the arc of ascent, unfolding and folding whatever exists in the arc of descent.

These two arcs are in complete correspondence with each other, similar to the correspondence that exists in the line of radiation and reflection. The line of radiation is always conditioned with the state of its immediate source, whereas the line of reflection is conditioned to the state of the ground to which the radiation reaches.

The divine line of radiation is termed in the Qur'an as spirit, light and command of God (روح، نور، أمر). The line of reflection is termed as soul or psyche or ego-centre of every individual and species. The purer the ground, the more will the reflection correspond with the radiation and vice versa.

The most purified quantity of matter carried by Adam and his chosen issues in the arc of ascent became the ground for reflecting arc of descent. As it has already been pointed out, the most appropriate term to present the nature of the first and the last entity in the degree of perfection in their respective arcs of descent and ascent is the term 'Muhammad' in its true adjectival sense.

It means the one who has been made praise-worthy, he is not self-praised as God's most submissive servant. He is the one who has been kept away from all defects and is gifted with all excellences and perfection by his Creator. Thus, the term 'Muhammad' presents the spirit and soul of one and the same entity, the most perfect spirit in the arc of descent and the most perfect soul in the arc of ascent.

They are almost identical with each other without any gap as the phrase 'Qaba Qawsain Aw Adna' in these verses:

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى

“Then he went near and becomes hanging (losing independence due to nearness),” (53:8)

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ

“Such as there was the measure between the two bows (facing each other) or nigher still.” (53:9)

7. According to the Qur'an the four-dimension sphere – of which our earth is an insignificant part – includes all the regions which are shining with stars, the solar systems, constellations and galaxies. The distance between them is so large that they are measured to some extent by light years. This huge sphere according to the Qur'an is the lowest sky or sphere encompassed by higher spheres beyond the

reach of empirical means.

Those skies and spheres go up and up till they reach the 'transcendent Absolute One', who is holding all by His creative Will and Might. Therefore, one can imagine the greatness of the thing which 'He', to whom the whole kingdom of the heavens and earth belong, describes as great.

It is God the Absolute, Great and High, Who describes 'Muhammad' as 'the person of great character.'

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

“And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character.” (68:4)

As such, nothing can be greater than Muhammad's character except the Essential Attributes of his Creator.

8. *Khulaq* (خالق) or character – when the creature is concerned – means the established state of mind responsible for all his actions. When it is concerning God, it signifies the principal attribute of God responsible for all the actions which include the system of creation, administration and legislation. That principal attribute is nothing but His Love and Mercy, which manifest in His Grace and Justice.

It is His Grace and Justice which are ever pervading all the spheres of existence. 'Muhammad', the first and the last among the created beings, in degree of perfection, is characterized in the Qur'an as the representation of this principal attribute of God. He has been sent down not to a particular sphere or region of the universe, but as a universal Grace of God to all the spheres, which are termed in the Qur'an as '*Alameen* (worlds).

In other words, to the worlds, wherein God is the “Lord Cherisher” (رب العالمين), Muhammad is His grace (رحمة للعالمين). Muhammad's limit of mission – in extensiveness and intensity – is in accord with the universal grace of God.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ

“Verily, those for whom blessings from Us went first Our Grace was ordained first, they shall be kept away from it (Hell).” (21: 101)

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا وَهُمْ فِي مَا اشْتَهَتْ أَنفُسُهُمْ خَالِدُونَ

“They hear not (even) the slightest sound of it (Hell), and they, in what their souls desire, shall abide.” (21: 102)

لَا يَحْزَنُهُمُ الْفَزَعُ الْأَكْبَرُ وَتَتَلَقَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ هَذَا يَوْمُكُمْ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

“Shall grieve them not that greatest terror, and the angels shall meet them (saying): This is your day, which ye were promised.” (21: 103)

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجْلِ لِلْكِتَابِ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

“On the day when We will roll up the heavens, as a written scroll is rolled up; As We began the first creation, so We will repeat it. (It is) a promise binding on Us, verily We shall fulfil it.” (21: 104)

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

“And indeed, We did write in the Psalms 1after the Reminder 2, that the earth shall be inherited by My righteous servants.” (21: 105)

إِنَّ فِي هَذَا لَبَلَاغًا لِقَوْمٍ عَابِدِينَ

“Verily this is a far-reaching lesson for devoted people.” (21: 106)

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

“And We sent the not (O’ Our apostle Muhammad) but the grace unto all worlds.” (21: 107)

It is the universal Grace of God, *Rahmatul-Lil-Alameen* with which Muhammad was commissioned and characterized as person of great character. Next to him, are those whom the Qur'an and Muhammad declare as ‘identical in spirit and soul’ with him as purified as he is 3

To this effect the prophet declared at the time of his departure from this world, “Only Qur'an and his *Ah/Al-Bayt*, are the two inseparable ones” who represent him through all the worlds in all aspects and respects till the day of resurrection.

The great sage and mystic, Hakeem Sennai says:

بر کتاب الله و عترت را احمد مرسل نماند

یادگاری کو توان تا روز محشر داشتن

“Nothing was left by the holy messenger of God to represent him and to remind people of him till the resurrection day except the Book of God and the holy members of his House”.

It is only the two – the 'Book' as the word of God and 'those' with whom is the knowledge of the Book – which will always bear the testimony to the truth and universality of the prophethood of Muhammad.

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

“And say those who disbelieve: Thou are not sent (by God). Say thou (O' Our Apostle Muhammad!); Sufficient is God a witness between me and you, and he with whom is the knowledge of the Book.” (13:43).

These two – the Book and those given the knowledge of the book – give evidence that Islam, in its most perfect form and exact sense of absolute submission to the Will of God, is the universal guidance and true religion with which ‘Muhammad’, the first and last in spirit and soul, was commissioned by God. As such, his religion is bound to overcome ultimately all other religions, despite the disliking of the disbelievers and of all the satanic forces.

This goal shall be achieved before the advent of the Resurrection Day by Al-Mahdi, the last member of the Holy Prophet's purified House. He is the one who bears the blood, name, feature, character and all the excellences which are signified in the term ‘Muhammad’. Through him, truth and justice with ultimately prevail throughout the world. It is due to this sublime status of 'Muhammad' in the hierarchy of both arcs that Qur'an declares.

كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعَدَّا عَلَيْنا إِنَّا كُنَّا فاعِلِينَ

“... As We began the first creation, so We will repeat it. (It is) a promise binding on Us, verily We shall fulfil it.” (21: 104)

God has, both directly and through His angelical agencies who are functioning who are functioning in the administration of the universes, blessed 'Muhammad' and along with him those dearest and nearest entities who are identical with him in purity of spirit and soul. Next to those blessed ones, blessed are those who are attached to them in spirit and soul and are always invoking God to bless 'Muhammad' and those who are attached to him in accordance with the degree and nature of their attachments.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

O' Allah! Bless Muhammad and the Family of Muhammad

Having concentrated so far, it is the duty of those who are anxious to have a glimpse of the spiritual aspect of the personality of the Holy Prophet, to refer only to these two sources of light, Qur'an and *Ahl Al-Bayt*.

1. Zabur given to David
2. Taurat given to Moses
3. Qur'an 33:33, 3:61 and 56:77-79 and other verses.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Appendix 3: Mi'raj

معراج

Note: *This is the third of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.*

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

“Glory be to Him Who carried His servant (Apostle Muhammad) by night from the holy mosque (of the Ka'ba) to the farthest mosque, which We have blessed its environment that We may show unto him, of Our signs; Verily He, is All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.” (17:1)

وَأْتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ هُدًى لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَلَّا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْ دُونِي وَكِيلاً

“And gave We unto Moses the Book (Torah) and made it a guidance for the children of Israel, (saying) that “Take ye not other than Me (anyone as) a guardian.” (17:2)

Before dealing with the specific issue of the ascension of the Holy Prophet – which is considered as one of the distinctive aspects of his personality in comparison to all other prophets – a few points may be said about the ascension in general. Ascension and descension are two terms used regarding the order of creation and as regards the human cognitive self, moving through the various realms and the spheres of finite beings up to the Absolute One and from there proceeding down again through the various

realms of the abstract and the spiritual beings of more comprehensive nature, down to the lowest finite material world.

This journey is of two types – intellectual (*fikri*) and visual (*shuhoodi*). The intellectual journey is common to all seekers of the truth, through metaphysical methods which is based on external senses and its zenith, the highest intellectual concept. The visual journey starts from the zenith of the intellectual journey as its base, through the various realms of the spiritual beings higher and even higher, up to the Absolute and then down again to its base. There is no prophet without this intuitive perceptual experience of Ascension and Descension, each according to his individual capacity.¹ It may be in the state of either a dream or being awake. For some it is in between state of being asleep and being awake, and it may take place more than once.

As regards the Holy Prophet, it is said that he had this kind of Ascension and Descension many a time. It is not only he, but even his divinely commissioned successors – the imams who in soul and body were his, and he was of them and all of whom were of one and the same divine light and origin – had this experience.

Now, as regards the specific type of Ascension attributed to the Holy Prophet – and agreed by all schools of thought in Islam as an article of faith – it is his physical ascension along with the visual one. Those who tried to create doubt about this, are of two groups. The first include those like Mu'awiyah Ibn of Abu Sufyan. People of this type had too much of a materialist tendency to appreciate or understand this highest apostolic or prophetic status. The second group comprises those philosophers who are highly influenced by the Ptolemaic and their principles of astronomical system. They could not imagine the possibility of the penetration of the celestial spheres and the firmaments by any terrestrial body.

The answer to these people is that modern astronomy has uprooted the whole theory and replaced it with new findings and postulations, which have prompted them to attempts at reaching the moon and the other planets. Whether they succeed or not, or whether their postulations be replaced with ones or not, the Qur'an has already declared the possibility of such penetration with the proviso of the attainment of the power and capacity to do it.

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا لَا تَنْفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَانٍ

“O ye Peoples of jinn and humans, if ye can penetrate the bonds of the heavens and earth, then do penetrate ye through; (But) ye cannot penetrate but with authority.” (55:33)

Therefore, the doubt based on such speculations and the materialist tendencies should be entirely discarded not only in connection with this specific kind of Ascension but also with the cases of miracles wrought by the Apostles of God and the other holy souls.

Of course a question remains that accepting the physical Ascension of the Holy Prophet by the lightning

force of the divine will and might throughout the physical sphere, and the disappearance of his body from the place (his bed) in the house of Umm Hani or the Masjid al-Haram (as it has been asserted by the traditions narrated by a great number of reliable companions and scholars such Ibn Abbas, Ibn Mas'ood, Anas, Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari, Huzaifah and Umm Hani and others besides the confirmation by Ali and the other imams of the house of the Holy Prophet), what was the ultimate point at which the journey ended? Was it physical or beyond the physical realm?

The end of the journey was to the Absolute. So far as the physical and the dimensional portion of the journey is concerned, it was undoubtedly physical and there is no argument of logical value to prove its impossibility. But beyond that, there is no room for the conception of the journey of a physical object into a non-physical realm. Here it is said that ascending towards the Absolute by the influence of the spiritual and divine light, the whole physical aspect is spiritualized. And passing the boundaries of the physical realm, the self entirely transcends the physical properties.

However, this Ascension is termed as the '*Mi'raj al-Wujoodi*', i.e. the total transformation of the personality of the Holy Prophet into a spiritual entity and Descension means his reappearance in his ordinary form. Although this may seem to be very difficult for the common readers to grasp and appreciate, this is the fact relating to the status of the person who as a light is the first in the order of creation, and as a prophet and messenger of God is the last in the sequence of the chosen Prophets.

Anyone who understands these two facts can understand the Ascension also. Anyway, a Muslim need to believe in the physical journey and the Ascension of the Holy Prophet to the farthest mosque, *Masjid-ul-Aqsa* where God is worshipped and which is the highest realm of creation, the surrounding of which is blessed by Allah and whose signs are on display therein.

Regarding the details of the Ascension journey, the traditionists and commentators have dealt with it in detail, but a few points forwarded by the great scholar, Tabrasi in his valuable commentary, *Majma'ul Bayan* are worthy of our notice.

He says there are four points to ponder about the Ascension:

1. The first and foremost, the physical Ascension in the state of being awake, which is to be accepted without any question.
2. There are details given of what the Holy Prophet said during his Ascension journey which are contradictory to any reasoning or principle.
3. There are things which are not apparently in agreement with certain reasoning and

principles, but they can be interpreted in a sensible way.

4. Such statements that are against reason and against the articles of the faith, and there is no room for any proper interpretation except:

- a. The first point is beyond doubt and questioning.
- b. The second one asserts that he visited the heavens and saw the prophets, the divine throne, the all-embracing terminal realms of the finite beings (the *Sidratul-Muntaha*), paradise, hell etc.

عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَى

“By the lote-tree of the utmost boundary.” (53: 14)

عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَى

“Nigh unto it is the Garden Abode.” (53: 15)

إِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَى

“When covereth (over) the ‘Sidra’ (tree) that which covereth it.” (53: 16)

مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَى

“Neither his eye did dazzle, nor did it rebel.” (53: 17)

لَقَدْ رَأَى مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَى

“Indeed, he did see of the greatest signs of his Lord.” (53: 18)

- c. He saw people in paradise enjoying and some suffering in hell. This should be interpreted as that he saw their descriptions and names.
- d. That which is to be rejected totally is the narration stating that he talked with God openly – that he saw God and sat on God’s throne, etc. These are an obvious anthropomorphism and humanization of God, which is remote from His glory and absoluteness. Similarly, the narrations stating that the Holy Prophet’s chest was cut open and washed is totally absurd. First, he was pure from all evil and dirt. Second, if there was any spiritual defect or dirt, there is no meaning in washing it with water.

All these nonsensical statements are evidently borrowed from the Christians, other anthropomorphic sources and the pagan cults by incompetent narrators who thought they should attribute to their prophet such statements that others have done to their religious leaders.

1. Refer to the Verse of the Holy Qur’an:

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

“These are the communication of Allah: We recite them to you with truth; and most surely you are (one) of the messengers.” (2:252).]

[1] [1]

SHARES

Appendix 4: Total Twafi And Rafa’a Means Total Ascension

توفي، رفع

Note: *This is the fourth of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.*

فَبِمَا نَقُضِهِمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِمْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا

يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

“Then because of their breaking of their covenant, and their disbelieving in the revelations of Allah, and their slaying of the prophets wrongfully, and their saying: Our hearts are hardened – Nay, but Allah set a seal upon them for their disbelief, so that they believe not save a few.”

(4: 155)

وَيَكْفُرُهُمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا

“And for their disbelief and for their utterance against Mary a grievous calumny.” (4: 156)

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَىٰ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا

“And for their saying (in boast): Verily we have slain the 'Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Apostle of God, and they slew him not, and they crucified him not, but (it) became dubious unto them; and indeed those who differ therein are only in doubt about (it) they have no knowledge about the (real) matter, pursuing (only) a conjecture; and certainly, they slew him not.” (4: 157)

بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

“But God raised (lifted) him up unto Himself; And God is Mighty, Wise!” (4: 158)

After negating emphatically Jesus being killed, the Qur'an has affirmed by using the particle 'bal' (بل) that God has raised him (Jesus) towards Him. This particle was used to negate all the suggestions that contradicted what really happened. According to the Qur'an what really took place was the raising (lifting) of Jesus (in body and soul) by God towards Him.

In this conflicting issue there remains one undisputed fact, that Jesus disappeared from the visible world. The disappearance of Jesus could have occurred in the following ways. First, separation of soul from the body by Jesus being killed. Second, by way of natural death and third, disappearance of Jesus from the visible world by raising him in soul and body from this world towards Himself.

In the first two cases, the term 'Twafi' (توفي) can be used, but it implies the raising of soul from the visible world towards Almighty God and the burial of the body in the terrestrial world, which is partial 'Twafi'. In the last case it is 'Twafi' but in the highest sense of a total hold by the Almighty over the person of Jesus.

If the separation of body from soul by way of killing was emphatically negated, it meant that the other

manner of separation i.e., natural death: then the death should have been affirmed after the use of the particle ‘*bal*’ in the following manner, “Certainly they did not kill him, on the contrary God made him die and then raised him.

But the Qur’anic verse as it is after negation of killing and the use of “*bal*” affirms the raising (of Jesus) which means total *twafi* in its fullest sense i.e. the ‘raising’ of body and soul together from this visible world. This total *twafi* or complete ‘raising’ is another exceptional manifestation of Divine Will in the case of Jesus.

He was not raised in body and soul from this visible world towards Him by the process of ‘separation’¹. However, according to the Qur’an the process of separation of body from the soul in some stages of existence or others is inevitable for every finite living being such as Jesus is not exempted from undergoing this process.

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

“And peace be on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised alive.” (19:33)

Therefore, he should come down to the visible sphere and undergo the inevitable before the final resurrection.

God raised Jesus (with soul and body) towards Himself in a manner that the non-physical beings assume bodies and these bodies were transformed into spirit. This kind of total departure, ‘*twafi*’ (توفي) which means special hold of God on Jesus in lifting him from the visible world into the invisible sphere in the same manner that God has a hold over the soul and body of every person at night (in sleep) and ‘He’ releases both soul and body in the day, (state of awakening) for certain period.

In this special case of Jesus, He exercises His hold by raising his soul and body into the invisible sphere for a period that may appear to us as long one. Again, ‘He’ will send him (Jesus) in soul and body back to the terrestrial realm. This return or descent will take place at the time when a witness will be brought from every nation, and when a group of people (not all of them) from every community of disbelievers will be brought again into the visible life.

It should be realized here that whatever appears in any sphere of existence, from the highest spiritual and angelical beings down to the material beings of four-dimensional sphere, and up again to the various stages of ascension, and development into various material species – inanimate and animate, such as plants, animals and man – all are manifestations and outcome of His creative and administrative will which is termed in the Qur’an as ‘*kun*’ (كُنْ) meaning ‘Be!’. All manifestations are termed as ‘*fayakun*’ (فَيَكُونُ) meaning ‘then it is’ as result of the imperative ‘be!’.

In this sense, every creature is the word of God and an outcome of His creative and administrative

command. The exercise by the Almighty's conscious creatures their limited will, as directed by Him as submission to His will, is termed as His Legislative Will. The highest form of this Legislative Will is communicated directly or through the angels or prophets to 'man' who is the highest and most complex creature in the hierarchy of material beings. This legislative Will is termed as '*kitab*' (كتاب) or 'word of God' which His vicegerents on earth were commissioned to preach.

Having this picture in mind, one should know that the clause '*kun fayakun*' (كُنْ فَيَكُونُ) – meaning 'be! And then it is' – though applies to every entity of every sphere, yet the Qur'an has emphatically used this clause in the following eight places:

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“He is the (wonderful) Originator of the heavens and the earth, and when He decreeth an affair He only sayeth to it ‘Be!’ and then it is’.” (2:117)

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“Said she: O' my Lord! How can I have a son when hath not touched me (any) man? He said: Even so doth God create whatsoever He willeth; When He decreeth a thing, then He only said unto it ‘Be! And then it is’.” (3:47)

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“Verily, with God the similitude of Jesus is as the similitude of Adam; He created him out of dust then said He unto him ‘Be! And it was’.” (3:59).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth with truth: and the day He sayeth ‘Be!’ And then it is....” (6:73)

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“Verily only Our word for a thing when We will it is that We say unto it, ‘Be!’ and then it is.” (16:40)

مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“It beseemeth not God that He should take unto Himself a son, glory be to Him; when a matter is decreed, He only sayeth unto it ‘Be!’ and then it is.” (19:35)

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“But His command, when intendeth He anything, is only that He sayeth unto it ‘Be!’ then (and there) it is.” (36:82)

هُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“He it is Who giveth life and causeth death, and when He decreeth an affair, He only sayeth unto it, ‘Be!’ And then it is.” (40:68)

Where the course of creation takes a new turn, or an extraordinary phenomenon appears in certain sphere of creation, it may be termed as miracle or exceptional manifestation of the divine creative and administrative will. The creation of Adam from inanimate matter or the appearance of life in lifeless matter, pregnancy of an extremely aged or barren woman through an aged man are other examples.

Changing a wooden rod into a living dragon, shifting of heavy throne over a remote distance within the twinkling of an eye, transformation of clay into a real bird, bringing a dead person to life, instant curing of a blind and deaf person without applying any medicine and making some persons sleep for three hundred years or more in a cave are a few extraordinary manifestations of the creative command of God.

The pregnancy of Virgin Mary through the spirit sent by God i.e. Jesus coming into existence in her womb as the word of God is one of the outstanding examples of ‘*Kun Fa Yakun*’. Similar to the extraordinary way of Jesus coming into the terrestrial realm, as the manifestation of the imperative Will of God, his departure was another extraordinary and exceptional manifestation of divine creative command. He was not killed as stated in the beginning and nor was he crucified.

It should be remembered that the Qur'an declares the birth and departure of Jesus as an extraordinary manifestation of the creative command of God and blames those idolaters who compared Jesus with their idols (deities) for the sake of mere dispute.

وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُونُ

“And when was set forth (Jesus) son of Mary as an instance (of Our power), lo thy people laughed out (in ridicule).” (43:57)

وَقَالُوا أَأَلِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ

“And they say: ‘Are our gods better or is HE’. They do not set it forth unto thee but by way of disputation; nay! They are a contentious people.” (43:58)

إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَثَلًا لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ

“He was nothing but a servant of ours on whom We bestowed favour (giving him the miracles) and made him an example (of our power) unto the children of Israel.” (43:59)

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ مَلَائِكَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُونَ

“And had We willed, certainly We could have made from among you angels to be in the earth successors.” (43:60)

Notwithstanding the Qur'anic emphasis on the fact that Jesus's case is an exceptional manifestation of the divine will, it is surprising how a believer in the truth of the Qur'an dares to interpret the verses of the Qur'an concerning Jesus to prove his birth or departure as absolutely one of the numerous ordinary manifestations of the divine creative command.

The belief of Jews about Jesus as compared to the belief of Christians is diametrically opposed. The Jews believed that he was an illegitimate child and was an impostor who was killed and crucified and that his body was buried from where his disciples had stolen and concealed it. The Christians believe that he was a legitimate child of Virgin Mary, who was married to Joseph the carpenter, and she became pregnant in a spiritual way before marriage. Thus, Jesus was the adopted son of Joseph, not his real son.

However, despite the confusing and contradictory statements of four gospels about the birth and genealogy of Jesus, they agree that she was pregnant without meeting any human male. There are also confusing statements regarding his ministry and his departure from this terrestrial world. But the common belief among them is that he was condemned by the Jews as an imposter, was arrested, and was crucified along with the two sinners on the gibbet and his body was brought down from the gibbet and buried in the graveyard.

After three days or less he was bodily raised to the heaven and appeared after a day or two to his disciples and told them that he would come down again to the terrestrial world for the establishment of divine kingdom on earth. Later he disappeared again. Further, they assert that he was the son of God, or the uncreated word of God identified with Him, and thus he was His incarnation.

It is obvious that both the Jewish and Christian beliefs about Jesus are in utter contrast to each other. One considers him as a cursed one and as an impostor who was crucified and killed, while the other considers him as the most blessed and beloved incarnation of God who was crucified, killed and suffered to save his believers from final destruction (as the saviour of his believers).

Refuting both extreme views, the Qur'an confirms the virginity of Mary and the extraordinary way of her pregnancy as a special manifestation of the creative will of God. It confirms also his being the true prophet who was commissioned with divine book or guidance and was bestowed with miracles of bringing a dead person back to life, creating a live bird from clay and performing other miracles, with the permission of God.

The Qur'an emphasizes the fact that Jesus was one of the 'created' and chosen servants and prophets of God and that his mother was a virgin, purified, chosen and virtuous. Both the mother and son lived in this terrestrial sphere. They eat and walk like other human beings. So, there is no question of Jesus's 'self-existence' or of his being an incarnation of the Absolute One.

He was one of the created, chosen servants of God. The Qur'an asserts that even the angels –whose creation is quite different from that of man – are servants of God. Nevertheless, the Qur'an lays stress on the fact that among the messengers of God, the birth, life and departure of Jesus are extraordinary and exemplary manifestations of the creative will of God. The Qur'an emphatically refutes both the Jewish and Christian beliefs that Jesus was crucified, killed or suffered natural death.

It asserts that God held Jesus' soul and body in His Custody which means total *twafi* and raised him towards Himself. During this period of total ordinary *twafi*, the Qur'an asserts that the soul and body of the man in the state of *twafi* is in the custody of angels.

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظِلْمَاتٍ
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

“And with Him are the keys of the unseen. None but He knoweth them. And He knoweth what is in the land and the sea. Not a leaf falleth but He knoweth it, not a grain amid the darkness of the earth, naught of wet or dry but (it is noted) in a clear record.” (6:59)

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُمْ بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“And He it is who taketh you away at night (in sleep), and He knoweth what ye acquire in the day, then He raiseth you up therein so that a prefixed term (of life) be fulfilled; then unto Him is your (ultimate) return, then He will declare unto you what ye were doing.” (6:60).

Twafi, in the sense of total hold, was applied to Jesus as an act of extraordinary manifestation of divine command concerning his disappearance from this terrestrial world. This *twafi* which has been used about Jesus is associated with his being raised towards Him and cannot mean natural death. But Jesus is not exempted from undergoing the process of death when the time of death would come.

Death is a universal law of divine will from which no creature – even the angels and spirits – are exempted. So, Jesus shall also die one day and shall be brought to life again. The question is that at the time when the Qur'an asserts his being raised, this inevitable process of death did not take place.

In some places, the Qur'an uses of the term '*twafi*' to mean death, which is not applicable to this exceptional, extraordinary occasion. His raising was sort of total ascension to the invisible sphere. The Holy Prophet also had the honour of experiencing this for a short period. The Qur'an also refutes the pagans' idea of comparing Jesus with their idols by stating that this comparison means nothing but an unreasonable argument to which the disbelievers are accustomed.

Here the Qur'an refutes the comparisons and observes 'Jesus is nothing but a servant of Us on whom We bestowed our special favour and made him an example of extraordinary manifestation of the divine creative command for the Children of Bani Israel'.

Therefore, it is illogical to compare the birth, departure and reappearance of Jesus with the birth, life and departure of other creatures who are the outcome of the usual process of manifestations and creative command of God. In confirming the extraordinary and exemplary case of Christ's birth, life and departure, the Qur'an removes the peculiarity of the case by asserting that even if God wills, he will make angels from men on earth as successors.

[1.](#) Separation of body and soul in death. [Note of Al-Islam.org]

[1] [1]

SHARES

Appendix 5: The Significance And Application Of Ayat At-Tat-hir

أية التطهير

Note: *This is the fifth of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.*

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

“... Verily, verily, God intendeth but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness O’ ye the people of the house and purify you with thorough purification.” (33:33)

In the beginning of this treatise, it has been painted out that ‘deen’ (religion) means the ‘submissive attitude’ of human conscience towards the ‘sacred object’. What refers to submissiveness is subjective, and what refers to the sacredness of the object is the objective aspect. The state of submissiveness is a question of degree. The sacredness of the object is in accordance with the excellence of attributes considered in the object.

Submissiveness varies in degree in accordance with the notion of the excellent attribute in the object. The absolute submission is in accord with the realization of absolute perfection of the object as absolutely superior in all excellent attributes. As such the subjective and objective aspects are inter-related, the higher the notion of perfection in an object the greater will be the degree of submission and vice versa.

This reciprocal relation is based on the limit of man's ego-centre. The wider the potentiality, the higher will be the notion of sacredness. An absolute perfect object can only be manifested in an absolute submissive centre. This means that the purity of man's ego-centre from all limited notions of the object is requisite for the manifestation of the Absolute One, All Pure and All Perfect.

The purity of ego-centre of an individual depends on the purity of the lineage from which the individual is developed. The lineage in question includes both human genealogical chain and the pre-human stages of the development from primal matter upwards leading towards human being. Every individual from all species will reach the final stage of perfection in accordance with the extent of the purity of lineage from which it has developed.

If we suppose human species as the most developed, complex conscious being, it will necessarily imply the utmost purity and refinedness in human lineage in comparison to other living species. The same principle applies to every individual man. The purer the lineage, the wider will be its ego-centre, which will have a higher notion of the Absolute One.

Therefore, among the human race there must be one lineage that is purer than the other lineages, so that there should be of that lineage a continuous chain of individuals with the purest ego-centre in order to have the highest possible notion of the Absolute, Unlimited One.

The Negative And Positive Aspects Required In The Conception Of Purity

Whatever narrows down the ego-centre towards material and temporal objects is a hindrance which affects submissiveness. The Qur'an terms it as 'rijs' (رِجْسٌ) and whatever action or notion causes the widening of the ego-centre to have a better manifestation of the Absolute One is termed by the Qur'an as *taharah* (طهارة):

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصْعَدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

“Whomsoever God intends to guide, He expands his breast for Islam (to submit his self to His will) and whomsoever he intends to leave straying, He makes (his) breast strained and narrow as if they had to climb up to the skies: Thus, God puts dirt (rijs) on those who disbelieve.” (6: 125)

Those who lack faith are termed as 'rijs' due to the perversion and narrowness in their ego-centre as opposed to those whose ego-centre has been widened to receive guidance from God for their submissiveness¹.

سَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَكُمْ إِذَا انْقَلَبْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ لِتُعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمْ فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ رِجْسٌ وَمَا وَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

“They will swear unto you by God, when ye return unto them, that ye may turn aside from them, so do turn aside from them; verily they are (filthy) and their abode is hell; a recompense for what they did earn.” (9:95)

The hypocrites have been termed as 'rijs' (رِجْسٌ) for their shaky faith and hypocritical attitude. In the same chapter, the unhealthy mind of the hypocrites is termed as inherent 'rijs' which converts the external guidance given by the prophets into further impurity.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَتْهُمْ رِجْسًا إِلَى رِجْسِهِمْ وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ

“And as for those in whose hearts is a disease (loathsome filth), it addeth unto them (further) filth (to their inherent filth) and they shall die while they are infidels.” (9: 125)

In chapter 5 (sura al-Ma'idah), intoxicants, gambling, idols, and divining arrows² are termed as 'rijs' wrought by Satan in order to create enmity and vengeance among the people and to divert their mind from the remembrance of God and prayer. A thorough study of these verses proves the fact that

whichever mental process or physical action diverts the ego-centre of man towards temporal and sensual desires is *rijs*³.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“O’ ye who believe (a fact and nothing else) that intoxicants and games of chance (dedication of stones (i.e. idols) and (divination by) arrows, are only loathsome filth wrought by Satan so be away from it so that ye may be successful.” (5:90)

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ

“The Satan only desireth to cause enmity and hatred in your midst through intoxicants and gambling, and keep you away from remembering God and from prayer; will ye then abstain (from them)?” (5:91)

On the other hand, whatever widens the egocentre of man towards the submission to the Absolute One and His Will is termed as purity such as prayer, spiritual cleanliness (which is called *tawba*), the physical cleanliness of body and dress which is essential for the prayer. It is obvious that there are degrees of such impurity and purity.

The highest degree of purity means to be kept constantly aloof from all the causes of impurity. This is termed as the state of infallibility in knowledge, character and action. Such a state of absolute infallibility should be possible and applicable to a particular group of humanity.

The Divine Order that makes one avoid the causes of impurity and adhere to the conditions of purity may be addressed to all in general. But in real life, the application of the order will be confined to those who are really carrying out the order. For example, the order for prayer and ablution applies to mankind, but the real application is confined to those who carry out the order.

In this sense all Divine Orders and precepts given to man through the prophets are general, but there are certain instances where God confines expressively His order to certain individuals or groups of people, excluding the rest of mankind from it. In these instances, whether the Divine Will is legislative or creative makes no difference.

In the instance of Chapter. 5. Verse 56 and Ch.33 verse 33 (*Ayat at-Tat-hir*) the order may be interpreted as manifestation of the legislative or creative will of God, but the application is exclusive. It should necessarily be true of those who are included in the order, otherwise the order will be meaningless.

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ

“And whoso taketh Allah and His messenger and those who believe for guardian (will know that), lo! The party of Allah, they are the victorious.” (5:56)

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

“And stay ye in your abodes and display not your finery like the display of the ignorance yore and establish ye prayer and give away the poor-rate, and obey God and His apostle, Verily, verily God intendeth but to keep off from you (every kind of) filth O’ ye the people of the house and purify you (with) a thorough purification.” (33:33)

The Divine Will mentioned the verse 33:33 – after the exclusive particle ‘*Innama*’ – has no application except to the holy *Ahl Al-Bayt*. Whether the Will is of creative or legislative nature, it makes no difference.

The Inseparability Of The Qur’an And The Ahl Al-Bayt

These entities, ‘*Ahl Al-Bayt*’, are purified and honoured by God directly in the same stage wherein the divine book has been purified and honoured. ‘The Qur’anic verses prove the equal standing of both the Book and the *Ahl Al-Bayt*. From sura al-Waqi’ah:

فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِمَوَاقِعِ النُّجُومِ

“But nay I sewar by the setting of the stars,” (56:75)

وَإِنَّهُ لَقَسَمٌ لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ

“And verily it is a great oath ye only knew it,” (56:76)

إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ

“Verily it is Qur’an honourable,” (56:77)

فِي كِتَابٍ مَكْنُونٍ

“In a Book hidden,” (56:78)

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ

“Toucheth it not, save the purified ones.” (56:79)

تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Sent down by the Lord of the worlds.” (56:80)

From Sura al-‘Abasa:

فِي صُحُفٍ مُكَرَّمَةٍ

“(It is written) in the Books greatly honoured.” (80:13)

مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُطَهَّرَةٍ

“Exalted high, purified,” (80:14)

بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ

“In the hands of the Deputy Angels,” (80:15)

كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ

“Noble, virtuous.” (80:16)

From surah al-Bayyinah:

لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ مُنْفَكِّينَ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ

“Those who disbelieved from among the people of the Book and the polytheists could not have separated themselves (from the falsehood!) until came unto them the Clear Evidence,” (98:1)

رَسُولٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ يَتْلُو صُحُفًا مُّطَهَّرَةً

“(In the) Apostle from God reciting (unto them) purified Scripture,” (98:2)

فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِيمَةً

“Wherein are the decrees (correct and) strong.” (98:3)

In the above verse 56:79, God declares *Ahl Al-Bayt* as the persons purified by Him to be constantly in touch with the 'Qur'an in its original, hidden, well-protected, exalted and purified form. This fact has been explained and supported by the celebrated statements of the Holy Prophet, narrated by the large number of his companions to the effect that he was leaving behind two inseparable precious entities among his followers i.e. the Book of God and his *'itrah (Ahl Al-Bayt)* and that whosoever adheres to the two shall be saved from going astray.

But to reduce the significance of this statement, and to counter the above declaration made by the Holy Prophet another statement has also been narrated from the Holy Prophet on the authority of Abu Huraira whose reliability has always remained questionable. In his narration, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: *“I have left among you two things; if you adhere to them both you shall not go astray after me, i.e., the Book of God and my Sunnah”*.

The text itself does not stand a sound critical scrutiny. There is no doubt that *Sunnah* in the sense of the Holy Prophet's sayings, actions and endorsements has the same authoritative status as the Qur'an, but the issue is that the Qur'an was in a written form and was distinctly recorded – to be referred to – while the Holy Prophet's *Sunnah* was then not yet recorded in a distinct form to be adhered to whenever disputes would arise.

On the contrary, the disputants used to take advantage of the unrecorded '*Sunnah*' against each other. Therefore, to declare such a controversial source to have the same authoritative status as the Qur'an would not only be meaningless, but it would also mean encouraging controversies. The term '*itrah* or *Ahl Al-Bayt* was well-defined and known to everybody as the embodiment of teachings of the Holy Prophet.

In short, to follow *Sunnah* as it is in our hand will lead to controversies and errors, but to follow *itrah* along with the Qur'an would mean following the *kitab* and *Sunnah* in its true sense, which would save the adherents from going astray and committing errors. Therefore, we shall leave the tradition of Abu Hurairah to himself and his followers.

Regarding the disputes about the personalities to whom the term *Ahl Al-Bayt* or *itrah* has been applied, there is hardly any need for discussion. The application of the term in question to the nearest members of the house of prophet through whom the holy house was established and continued to last forever is

undoubtedly unquestionable. They are the persons to whom reference has been made as *abna-a-na* (our sons) *nisa-a-na* (our women), *anfusana* (our souls).

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ

“And unto him who disputeth with Thee, therein after the knowledge hath come unto thee, Say (O’ our apostle Muhammad) (unto them), “come ye, let us summon our sons, and (ye summon) your sons, and (we summon) our women and (ye) your women, and (we summon) ourselves and (ye) your selves and then let us invoke and lay the curse of God on the liars.” (3:61)

The traditions and historical reports are unanimous that they are none but Hasan, Al-Husayn, Fatimah and Ali. It is true that through Fatimah and Ali the ‘house of prophet’ was established, and their progeny continued to propagate until now. They are the certified members of the house of prophet and the certified members of Aali Ibrahim from the Ismailite branch. The efforts of some Muslim antagonists and writers to include the wives of the Holy Prophet or his other relatives in the term *itrah* and *Ahl Al-Bayt* are uncalled-for and are against the verdict of the Qur’an and sayings of the Holy Prophet.

The *Ahl Al-Bayt* mentioned in the verse 33:33 includes none but Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Al-Husayn and the other nine imams of the descendants of Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) who possess the same excellence of infallibility. The wives of Holy Prophet, who remained childless cannot be included in it as the wives of prophet – though they are respected and are of high standard, yet there were other women who could be better than them.

عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُ إِنْ طَلَّقَنَّ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُ أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا مِنْكُمْ مَسْلِمَاتٍ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ قَانِتَاتٍ تَائِبَاتٍ عَابِدَاتٍ سَائِحَاتٍ ثَيِّبَاتٍ وَأَبْكَارًا

“Haply his Lord, if he divorceth you, will give him in your place wives better than you, submissive, faithful, obedient, repentant, observers of fast, widows and virgins.” (66:5)

They cannot have the same position as *Ahl Al-Bayt*. Otherwise, the word ‘*innama*’ (امامة) in verse 33:33 would be meaningless.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

“Ye are the best group that hath been brought forth for mankind: ye enjoin goodness and ye forbid evil, and ye believe in God; And if the people of the Book had (also) believed (similarly) it had surely been better for them; of them (only some) are believers and most of them are

perverse.” (3: 110)

As such, the term *khair al-Ummah* (خَيْرُ الْأُمَّةِ) in the above verse is only applicable to the *Ahl Al-Bayt* and none can lay claim to it or the leadership incumbent on *khair al-Ummah* in the verse below.

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“And there should be among you a group who call (mankind) unto virtue and enjoin what is good and forbid wrong; and these are they who should be successful.” (3: 104)

The other relatives of the Holy Prophet, even of Hashimite house on whom *sadaqa* (charity) is forbidden, do not come under the definition of *Ayat at-Tat-hir* and *Ayat al-Mubahila*. Of the descendants of Ali and Fatimah, also, all do not come under the term in its strict sense. It applies only to the eleven imams of the house who have been certified to possess the requisite qualification and absolute purification.

Even the inclusion of fallible persons of the house of Holy Prophet and the house of Hashim in *Ayat al-Muwaddatul-Qurba* below is questionable because the love is questionable because the love on account of nearness to the Holy Prophet merely in blood or faith cannot be the reward for '*risalat*' unless there is nearness in blood as well as spiritual attainment.

ذَلِكَ الَّذِي يُبَشِّرُ اللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

“This is what God gives, as good tidings to those servants of His who believe and do right deeds: Say (O' Prophet) I do not ask you any reward for it (the mission) save the love for the sake of nearness (to me or to God)” (42:23)

They should be originated from the same light from which the Holy Prophet has been originated. As tradition asserts, the number of such infallible personalities after the Holy Prophet who succeeded as his vicegerents is limited to twelve

For a detailed discussion of this passage, the readers may refer to the author's treatise, *Introduction to the Qur'an*⁴.

¹ This term 'rijs' has also been applied to those who lack sound reasoning.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَيَجْعَلُ الرَّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

“And (although) it is not for any soul to believe except by God's permission; while casteth He uncleanness (of infidelity) on those who use not (their) sense.” (10:100)

² It was a practice among the Arabs to foretell the future by using arrows [Note by al-Islam.org]

³ It is noteworthy that the learned translators of the Qur'an did not select one word. The words used for rijs are abomination, uncleanness, impurity, loathsome filth and dirt, which they deemed appropriate according to the context.

Moreover, it should be realized that *rijs* in its usages signifies one and the same sense as the author has explained in his works.

4. Under the topic *Muhkam* and *Mutasbabeat*.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Appendix 6: Ummah, Imamah And Wilayat

أُمَّةٌ، إِمَامَةٌ، وَوِلَايَةٌ

Note: *This is the sixth of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.*

In order to gain a deeper insight of the subject of *Imamah*, *Ummah* and *Wilayat*, one should understand passages of the Qur'an that are directly or indirectly concerned with *Ahl Al-Bayt*.

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ

“And remember when his Lord tried Ibrahim with certain words then he fulfilled them; He said, “Verily I am making thee imam for mankind;” (Ibrahim) said “And of my offspring”? He said: My covenant reacheth not the unjust.” (2: 124)

Reference is made to the declaration of Ibrahim as the appointed imam for the people by God. This status of *Imamah* is specifically meant for the progeny of Ibrahim, excluding the unjust ones.

God declares in the verses below that that Adam, Nuh, Aali Ibrahim and Aali Imran as the ‘chosen lineage’ from which the imams are to be appointed by Him.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

“Verily, God did choose Adam and Nuh and the descendants of Ibrahim and the descendants of Imran above all the worlds,” (3:33)

ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“Offspring, one from the other; and verily God is All-Hearing; All-knowing.” (3:34)

The Qur'an asserts that this holy book which is revealed to the Holy Prophet certifying all previous scriptures – in their true forms – shall be inherited by those servants of God who are from the chosen lineage, but not all of them:

وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِ لَخَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ

“And that which We have revealed unto thee of the Book, it is the truth testifying that which hath come before it; Verily God, about His servants, is All-Aware, All-Seeing.” (35:31)

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ

“Then we made those whom we had chosen inherit the Book; Then of them some are unjust to themselves, and some are of average (standard) and some are foremost, by the grace of God, in all virtues, This is that great blessing.” (35:32)

جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٌ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ

“Gardens of eternity, they shall enter into” (35:33)

The members of the chosen lineage are of three types, some unjust, some or average standard and some of them are designed by God ‘to be foremost in all that is good’ which is a great distinctive virtue. The term ‘being foremost’ in all that is good’ (والسابقون السابقون) is almost synonymous with the term ‘imam’. The ‘imam’ means the ‘head of all in obedience to God’.

The term *khalifa* (vicegerent on earth) in the verse below has been used for man only, exclusive of all other creatures–:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Recollect (O' our Apostle Muhammad) when said thy Lord unto the angels: ‘Verily I am appointing a vicegerent on earth’ they said: Will Thou (O' Our Lord) appoint therein one who will cause mischief and shed blood, while we celebrate by Thy praise and hallow Thee alone? Said (the Lord to the angels): ‘verily, I know what ye know not.’” (2:30)

Every creature is a sign of God, but none is a vicegerent of God, except the man who is 'foremost' in absolute obedience to God. The man of this type has been described in sura al-Waqi'ah as the foremost in obedience and nearest to God.

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ

“And the foremost one (in faith and virtue) shall be the foremost ones (in receiving their reward),” (56: 10)

أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ

“These are they who shall be brought nigh (unto God).” (56: 11)

In sura al-Baqarah (2: 143), references are made to ‘Ummahan wasan’ (middle group) and in sura ale-Imran (3: 110–114) references are made to *khair al-Ummah* (خَيْرُ الْأُمَّةِ) and ‘Ummah qa’imah (أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ), which mean the group of ‘distinguished persons’ who are ahead of all in all the excellences and have to lead mankind towards this noble aim.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

“And thus, have we made you of a middle nation (justly balanced) that ye may be witnesses over mankind and the Prophet be (‘a) witness over you....” (2: 143)

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

“Ye are the best group that hath been brought forth for mankind: Ye enjoin goodness and ye forbid evil, and ye believe in God. And if the people of the Book had (also) believed (similarly) it had surely been better for them; of them (only some) are believers and most of them are perverse.” (3: 110)

لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ

“They are not alike; of the people of the Book is a group (so) upright (in faith) that they recite the signs of God all along the night and prostrate themselves in adoration.” (3: 113)

يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

“They believe in God and in the Last Day (of Resurrection), and enjoin goodness and forbid evil, and compete hastily to do good, and these are of the righteous ones.” (3: 114)

In another verse, Ibrahim has been presented as ‘*Ummahan qanitan*’, which cannot mean anything other than ‘imam’.

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

“Verily Ibrahim was an imam (leader in religion) (for the) people, devoutly obedient to God, upright, and he was not of the polytheists,” (16: 120)

The verse below supports the idea that *Ummah* or imam in this sense means ‘*Ummah al-muslimatan*’ mentioned in the subsequent set of verses below.

مَلَّةً أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

“And fight (endeavour) ye in (the way of) God as it behoveth you to fight (endeavour) for Him; He hath chosen you and hath laid not upon you any hardship in religion; The faith of your father Ibrahim: He (God Himself) named you Muslim before and in this, that the apostle may be a witness over you and ye be a witness over the people; So establish ye prayer and pay ye the poor-rate and hold ye fast by God; He is your Master – How Excellent the Master and How Excellent the Helper!” (22: 78)

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

“And remember when Ibrahim raised the foundations of the House with Ismail, (praying) ‘Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us; verily Thou and Thou (alone) art the All-Hearing and All-Knowing.’” (2: 127)

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

“Our Lord! Make us (two) Muslims submitting (only) to Thee and of our progeny (make) a group submissive (only) to Thee and show us the ways of devotion and turn to us (mercifully) for verily Thou and Thou (alone) art the Oft-Returning, the Most Merciful.” (2: 128)

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

“Our Lord: raise up amongst them an apostle from them, who shall recite unto them Thy revelations and teach them the Book and Wisdom and purify the for Thou and Thou (alone) art the mighty, the Wise.” (2: 179)

This term includes Ibrahim, his son Ismail and of the descendants of Ismail and those who continued to follow in the footsteps of Ibrahim and Ismail. This *Ummah al-Muslimatan* continued to be guided by God towards the right path of devotion, the last Prophet Muhammad (S) being chosen from this Ummah and commissioned with the final message of God to mankind.

These personalities are from *Ale Ibrahim*, mentioned in sura an-Nisaa', are gifted by God with the Book, wisdom and the Great Kingdom.

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَى مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا

“Or do they envy the people for what God hath given them of His grace; But indeed, We have given to Ibrahim’s children the Book and the Wisdom, and We gave them a Great Kingdom.” (4:54)

Sura al-Ma’ida (chapter 5) is generally considered to be the last among the long chapters during the gradual revelation of the Qur'an, just as Sura an-Nasr (Chapter 110) is considered to be the last one among the short chapters. For the purpose of recitation, this chapter has been placed where it is now, according to the 'divine order'.

It follows Surah an-Nisaa' (chapter 4), and most of the contents of both the Chapters 4 and 5 are inter-related. A point that is particularly worth noting is that the last few verses [1](#) assert the purpose of the divine revelation and the coming of the prophets one after another so that no room shall be left for people to argue against God about the incompleteness of the divine mission after the coming of the last prophet.

In other words, the verses concerned declares that the last prophet was gifted with all the means of receiving the divine messages to be delivered to mankind so that no one should have – after him – any basis of arguing for the defects in the means of divine guidance.

The contents of Chapter 5 are mostly related to the completion of the requisite guidance after the last prophet. So, this is the first chapter that begins with addressing the believers and not the people in general. Here God declares the following. First, the completion of religion for the believers and His approval of Islam for them as the only religion. Second, the importance of the fulfilment of the divine covenant with God and third the blames on the Jews and Christians for their failure in fulfilling the 'divine

covenant'.

God announces the importance of this chapter to be so great that if the Holy Prophet fails to deliver its contents to people, it would not only be his failure but also the failure of the divine mission from the beginning to end. Here the passage shows that many prominent people were reluctant about the announcement of the contents to the extent that the very life of the Holy Prophet was in danger.

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

“(O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!) Deliver thou what hath been sent down unto thee from thy Lord; and if thou dost it not, then (it will be as if) thou hast not delivered His message (at all); and surely will God protect thee from (the mischief) of men, Verily, God guideth not an infidel people.” (5:67)

Knowing the importance of this chapter in view of verses 54, 55 and 56, the complete attention of a true believer is required:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“O’ Ye who believe! Whoever of you turneth away from his religion, soon will God bring (forward) a people, whom He loveth, and they love Him, who are humble before the believers, mighty against the infidels, striving hard in God’s way, and they fear not the censure of any censurer: This is the grace of God, He giveth it to whomsoever He desireth, verily God is Ample-Giving, All Knowing.” (5:54)

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

“Verily, verily, the benevolent authority over you is (none else but) God and His apostle and of the believers, those who establish prayer and pay the poor-rate, while they are in the state of Rokoo’ 2.” (5:55)

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ

“Whoever accepts Wilayat of Allah (in the sense above) and of the apostle (Muhammad) and of those who believe (the prescribed belief), Verily he hath joined God’s battalion; they are

triumphant.” (5:56)

These verses address the believers who were present at that time. It shows the possibility of their reversion to their pre-Islamic practices and faith, and then warn them of God's decision to bring in their place a group of people who are loved by God and who love Him. The description of this group is that 'it is humble towards believers and mighty towards the infidels. The members of the group wage war for the sake of God without caring for the blame by the people.'

The Qur'an describes these qualifications as special grace of God bestowed upon these people. Then, the Qur'an addresses the believers in an emphatic tone: **“Surely your wali (benevolent authority) is God and His prophets and of the believers those who establish prayers and give alms while they are in the state of 'Rukoo'.”**

The exclusive particle '*Innama*' confines the term *wali* to God, the prophet and the specific believers of the abovementioned qualification. *Wilayat* in this sense cannot mean anything but the authority of one over the other due to his extreme love and attachment towards God and His creation – the meaning that is found in the attribute of God as '*Rahman*'.

This outstanding qualification cannot be attained by all believers, but only those who have reached that state of submissiveness whereby they are totally absorbed in the realization of the greatness of God, and at the same time are aware and responsive to the needs of destitute ones.

They can continue to have in the focus of their consciousness – at one and the same time – two opposite realizations, absolute nearness to God and absolute nearness to His creatures. Such a selfless person is the medium representing God's gracious authority over mankind and representing man's destitution to God: So, for the believers there is no *wali* in this sense of authority but God Himself, His prophet and those among the believers who can combine – at the same time *Rokoo'* – the extreme state of one's complete absorption in realization of the greatness of God and his being alive to the needs of the creature. This principle applies not only to *Hazrat* Ali ('a), the first vicegerent of God after the Holy Prophet, but to all the twelve infallible imams of the holy House (including *Hazrat* Ali).

Wali, *imam*, *khalifa* and other synonyms refer to the same and one qualification of vicegerency of God (*wilayat*), which must continue without any break from the start of creation up to its end. The application of the contents of this verse is confined to the three classes mentioned therein. In verse 5:56 the Qur'an declares that of the believers, those who accept the *wilayat* of God and the prophet and of the abovementioned specifically defined class of believers are of the party of God, who will ultimately overpower and dominate all other parties.

The insignia of this party is the reciprocal love between God and themselves. This insignia was bestowed by the Holy Prophet to Ali in the battle of Khaybar. It means that the insignia of Godly party is in the hands of Ali and the other eleven infallible imams of the holy house. Whosoever is under this banner and adheres to the principle of reciprocal love will be of the successful party, chosen by God.

This banner and insignia are the manifestations of universal grace of God ‘*Ar-rahman-ar- Raheem*’ and it shall be in this holy house till the Resurrection Day. None can take it from them, nor can anybody grant it to them. The Holy Prophet says that on the 'Resurrection Day' Adam and all the prophets after him shall be under his banner that Ali will carry.

The importance of *Imamah, wilayat, khilafat* and the synonymous terms which refer to the vicegerency of God and the representative status of man are so great that the Qur'an has termed this '*Naba -al-Azeem*'. This was a subject of conflict not only among men but also among angelical beings of high order. Thus, the Qur'an though very brief in dealing with the other subjects of Islam, has dealt with this problem in detail in various chapters and verses.

It has declared that the appointment of man of such status is His own responsibility and not that of anyone else³. Even the prophets have no right to appoint. They only need to convey the name and qualification of the divine nominee to mankind.

In the verse below the Qur'an asserts that the method of appointment of vicegerent on earth after the prophet shall be the same as before which means that the appointment shall remain the responsibility of God alone.

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

“God hath promised unto those of you who believe and do good deeds that He will certainly appoint them successors in the earth as He appointed successors to those before them, and certainly He shall establish for them their religion (Islam) which He hath chosen for them, and certainly He after their fear in exchange give them security; They shall worship Me; and associating not with Me aught; and whosoever disbelieveth after this, these! They are the wicked ones.” (24:55)

The instance of God nominating *khalifa*, imam and vicegerent has been mentioned in many passages. The very passage in verse 2:30 regarding Adam is enough to prove that it is God who shall continue appointing His vicegerents on earth.

These verses below from sura an-Nisa' refer to the obligation of mankind in obeying the '*ulil-amr*' which implies obedience to the supreme commanding authority in the same way as the necessity of obedience to the prophet.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

“O’ ye who believe! Obey God and obey the apostle and those vested with authority from among you; and then if ye quarrel about anything, refer it to God and the apostle if ye believe in God and the last day (of judgment); This is the best and the fairest way of ending (the dispute).” (4:59)

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

“And when there cometh unto them news of security or (of) alarm, they spread it abroad: and if they referred it to the apostle and (to) those ‘subordinate commanding authority’ (who could) draw the matter (the truth) in it; would have known it (the truth) from them; and were it not for the grace of God upon you and His mercy, you would certainly have followed the devil save a few.” (4:83)

The ‘supreme commanding authority’ endowed with such excellent qualifications which cannot be found in anyone but in those God has certified to be purified from all defects and who shall possess the highest standard of perfection possible for a created being in the sense of the ability to guide every being to the truth and be not in need of guidance by any other created being:

قُلْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَنْ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ قُلِ اللَّهُ يَهْدِي لِلْحَقِّ أَفَمَنْ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُتَّبَعَ أَمْ لَا يَهْدِي إِلَّا أَنْ يَهْدَىٰ فَمَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ

“Say thou (O’ Our apostle Muhammad); Of your associates is there anyone who can guide unto truth; Is then He who guideth unto truth more worthy to be followed or he who himself goeth not aright unless he is guided? What then hath befallen you” How (ill) ye judge?” (10:35)

This is the key verse on which the Queen of Paradise Fatimah (‘a), daughter of the Holy Prophet, based her argument against her opponents in her famous speech in the Mosque of the Prophet (*Masjid an-Nabawi*) when she was compelled to expose those who began to reverse towards their own pre-Islamic ways.

It is this speech that the Shi’a theory of *Imamah* is based on. In support of this statement, the sixth imam of the holy house, Ja’far as-Sadiq (‘a), in the course of discussion between him and the leaders of Mu’tazilah school of thought including Wasil Ibnu Ata, Amr Ibn Ubaid, Hafs bin Salam Ibn ‘Ubayd and Hafs bin Salam, who approached him to comply with their proposal of adopting Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) as Khalifa in place of Umayyad rulers, narrated on the authority of his father the fifth Imam Muhammad-al-Baqir (‘a) that the Holy Prophet (S) had said,

“Whosoever calls people to obey him and draws sword to make people to accept his claim while amongst the people of his time there is one who is superior to him in knowledge of Kitab and Sunnah, he is an

impostor and the one gone stray”[4](#)

The political and religious importance of this discourse for every generation of Muslims is very great as it reflects the ideology of the Shi’a school of thought.

The '*Epistle*', written by the 8th imam of Ahl Al-Bayt Ali Bin Musa ar-Ridha' for Caliph Ma'moon, outlines the fundamental beliefs and practical precepts of Islam. After giving a brief account of the divine attributes that a true Muslim must believe in and profess, the holy imam writes as follows:

'And to believe and to confess that Muhammad (S) is His devoted servant, His messenger, His trusted agent, His selected and outstanding and purified among the creatures, the head of all messengers, the last one among the prophets, and the superior to all realms of creation: there is no prophet after him and no substitute to his religion and no change in his law and that whatever he, prophet Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, has brought is clear truth, necessary to be believed in and confessed along with all that the messengers of God and His prophets and vicegerents have brought before him.

And it is necessary to believe and confess the truth of His book Qur'an which is unique in its form and essence and so purified that no falsehood would approach it from any direction, from the front or from behind. It is a revelation from the All-Wise, All-praiseworthy (Allah). It is to be believed and acknowledged that the book Qur'an is the supreme-most guardian over all the divine books. It is thoroughly true from its beginning to the end. We believe in all its contents, unequivocal passages and equivocal ones, its particular and its general significance, its promises and its warnings, its abrogating and abrogated passages, its stories and information; and of the creatures none can bring the like of it.

We believe and confess that the guide and supreme authority over the believers after the prophet and the person who is in charge of the affairs of Muslims and who has the right to speak on behalf of the Qur'an and the one who is well-acquainted with the contents of the Qur'an is his brother, successor, the executor of his will and the commanding authority between God and His creature; the one who is to the prophet as Harun is to Moosa, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, *Amir ul-Mu'minin* (the commander of the faithfuls) *Imam ul-Muttaqeen* (the leader of righteous people), *Qa'id ul- Ghro al-Muhajjaleen* (the chief of those who are bright and famous in righteousness), *Afzal ul-Wasiyyeen* (the superior among all the executors of the wills of prophets), *Warith al-'ilm an-Nabiyyin Wa al-Mursaleen* (the inheritor of knowledge of all divine messengers and prophets). We believe and confess that Ali has been succeeded by his sons Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn (the two chiefs of the youths of paradise), in turn one after the other, Ali Ibn Al-Husayn the ornaments of all devotees, then Muhammad Ibn Ali (who penetrated the length, breadth and depth of knowledge given to the people), then Ja'afar Ibn Muhammad (the truthful saint and inheritor of the knowledge of all the successors of the prophets), then Musa Ibn Ja'afar (who used to restrain his anger against the wrongdoers in order to set example of tolerance), then Ali Ibn Musa ar-Ridhaa (who is pleased with whatever pleases God), then Muhammad Ibn Ali⁵, then Ali Ibn Muhammad⁶, then Hasan Ibn Ali⁷ then the authoritative proof (al-Hujjat) standing in charge of divine order, whose appearance is awaited for (*al-Muntazar*) – peace and blessings of God may be upon them all.

I believe and confess for them the status of divine leadership and executor of divine wills. We believe and confess that the earth never for a moment is devoid of such an authoritative proof (*Hujjat*) appointed by God over his creatures. We believe and confess that the abovementioned saints (imams) are the strong rope between God and His creatures. They are the guiding leaders, supreme authority over the people of the terrestrial realm, succeeding one by the other till the return of earth and all that it contains to God.

We believe and confess that whoever disagrees with them is misled and misleading, imposter and pervert to the truth and guidance. We believe and confess that they are the sole–interpreters of the Qur’an and authorized to speak on behalf of the Holy Prophet; and whosoever dies without knowing and recognizing them, he would die a pagan death.

We believe and confess that the following are some of the virtues which are the practical part of their religion; First, being ever mindful of what pleases and displeases God. Second, *Iffat* (self–control). Third, truthfulness, love for the well–being of mankind to lead people to righteousness and return of whatever is trusted to them by the virtuous or the wicked.’

A study of the entire text of the '*Epistle*' will enlighten the seekers of the 'right path'.

1. See the verses 163 to 166 of Sura an–Nisaa’:

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَىٰ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ ۗ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا

“Verily, We have revealed unto thee (O’ Our apostle Muhammad!) as We did reveal unto Nuh and the prophets after him, and we have revealed unto Ibrahim, and Ismail and Ishaq and Yaaqoub and the tribes, and Isa and Ayub and Yunus, and Harun and Sulayman, and We gave Dawud the Zabur (Psalms)” (4: 163)

وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۗ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا

“And apostles We have (already) mentioned unto thee before and apostles We mentioned not unto thee; and God spake unto Moses, directly discoursing.” (4: 164)

رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

“Apostles of good cheer and of warning, in order that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the apostles. Allah was ever Mighty,” (4: 165)

لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ ۗ أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ ۗ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

“But God (Himself) beareth witness, through what He hath sent down unto thee (O’ Our apostle Muhammad!). He has sent that down, with His knowledge; and the angels (too) bear witness; and sufficient is God for Witness.” (4: 166)

2. The act of bowing down during prayer.

ۚ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَكِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ إِذْ قَالُوا لِنَبِيِّهِمْ ائْبِعْ لَنَا مَلَكًا نُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۗ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَيَّكُمْ الْقِتَالُ أَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا ۗ قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَائِنَا ۗ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ

“Hast thou (O’ Our apostle Muhammad!) not seen the chiefs of the children of Israel, after Moses, when they spake to a prophet (who was) unto them (saying) ‘Raise up for us a king, that we may fight in the path of God’. He said, ‘May it not be that if fighting were ordained unto you, ye would not fight?’ they said, ‘What aileth us that we should not fight in the path of

God when we have indeed been driven out from our homes and our children?’ But when fighting was ordained unto them, they turned back, save a few of them; and verily, God knoweth the unjust.” (2:246)

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا ۗ قَالُوا أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ ۗ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مَلَكَهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“And their prophet said unto them "Verily, God hath raised up for you Saul (to be) the king (over you);" They said, ‘How can the kingdom be his over us whereas we are more rightful for it than he while he is not gifted with abundance of wealth,’ he said. ‘Verily, God hath chosen him over you and hath increased him abundantly in knowledge and physique; and verily God granteth His kingdom unto whomsoever He pleaseth; God is Omniscient and All-knowing.’” (2:247)

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُم إِن كُنتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ

“And (then) said their prophet unto them, ‘Verily, the sign of his kingship shall be that the ark shall come unto you wherein shall be tranquility from your Lord and the relics of what the family of Moses and family of Aaron left behind; the angels (of God) shall bear it; verily, therein shall be a sign for you if ye are (indeed) believers.’” (2:248)

[4.](#) Vide Thazeeb by Shaikh Toosi: Chapter on Jihad.

[5.](#) Muhammad Ibn Ali at-Taqi.

[6.](#) Ali Ibn Muhammad an-Naqi.

[7.](#) Hasan Ibn Ali al-Askari.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Appendix 7: The Qur’anic Significance Of Shahadat And Its Application

Note: *This is the seventh of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.*

Shahadat is generally used in the sense of 'martyrdom', that is to be killed in fighting for a sacred cause, but so far as the Qur'anic usage of the term is concerned, nowhere has it been used in this sense. The Holy Qur'an has used it in the sense of witnessing a sound and proper observation of an object as it really is.

The object may be physical when it is perceivable by the external senses, and it may be mental and spiritual when observed and realized by one's cognitive self. In any case, '*shahadat*' or witnessing is a state or attitude of unshakable realization of a fact. The word '*Shaheed*' in verse 69 of chapter 4 has usually been translated by some commentators to mean martyrdom, but a deep study of these two

passages will prove beyond doubt that even there it has been used in the sense of witnessing.

وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ
أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا

“And whoever obeyeth God and the apostle (Muhammad) these shall be with those God hath bestowed favours upon them; of the prophets, and the truthful and the Witnesses of the righteous on; and excellent are these as companions.” (4:69)

وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لِيُبْتَغَىٰ فَرَأَىٰ مِنْهُ بُرْءًا لِلَّهِ فَأَتَىٰ اللَّهَ فَنَجَّىٰ رَبَّهُمْ لَبِيبًا
وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لِيُبْتَغَىٰ فَرَأَىٰ مِنْهُ بُرْءًا لِلَّهِ فَأَتَىٰ اللَّهَ فَنَجَّىٰ رَبَّهُمْ لَبِيبًا

“And verily of you is he who certainly hangeth back: If then a misfortune befalleth you, saith he: God had been gracious unto me, that I was not present with them.” (4:72)

God, the Creator of the universe, is described in the Qur'an as witness (Shaheed) over every being, big or small, concrete or abstract, apparent or hidden. Nothing is hidden from Him, everything is present to Him as it is in itself. He is the witness, witnessing and witnessed. He is the knower, Knowing and the Known:

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

“God (Himself) witnesses that there is no God but HE, and (so do) the angels and those possessed of knowledge, standing firm for justice; (there is) no God but HE, the Mighty, the Wise.” (3: 18)

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

“Soon We will show them our signs in the horizons (of the world), and in their own selves, until He becometh manifest unto them that He is the Truth. Is it not sufficient thy Lord that He is a witness over all things.” (41:53)

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ فِي مَرِيبَةٍ مِّنْ لِّقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ أَلَا إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطٌ

“(Be it known that) verily they are in doubt about the meeting with their Lord! (Be it known that) verily He encompasseth everything.” (41:54)

In these passages ‘knower’ and ‘knowing’ can be but one and the same, as is the case with every

conscious and being. The angels, the intellectual and spiritual beings and entities have been described to be the witness of His unity, oneness, omniscience and omnipotence.

Among mankind, the prophet and the vicegerents of God, the spiritual leaders, 'imam' have been presented in the Qur'an as the witness of the Truth in the visible and the unseen world:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرُءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

“Thus, We have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you. And We appointed the qiblah which ye formerly observed, only that We might know him who followeth the messenger, from him who turneth on his heels. In truth, it was a hard (test) save for those whom Allah guided. But it was not Allah's purpose that your faith should be in vain, for Allah is Full of Pity, Merciful toward mankind.” (2: 143)

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبْيَانًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

“And on the day when We will raise up in every people from among themselves a witness (upon them) and bring thee, (O' Our apostle Muhammad) as a witness upon all these; and We have revealed the Book to you explaining clearly everything, and a guidance and mercy and good news for those who submit.” (16:89)

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

“... The faith of your father, Ibrahim; He (God Himself) named you Muslims before and in this, that the apostle may be a witness over you and ye be a witness over the people; ...” (22:78)

The Holy Prophet (S), with the status of being sent by God as the 'universal grace' or His Grace for all the worlds, has been described in the Qur'an as the witness over all the witnesses. The leading personalities chosen from among the descendants of Ibrahim, who were the topmost in whatever was good and foremost in submission to the will of God, are presented as witness over mankind and whatever is true, and the prophet be witnessed over them.

Thus, according to the Qur'an 'shahadat', is the highest spiritual status bestowed by God on the persons who have attained the state of realization of the Creator and the creatures, and the true relation between them. In short, *shahadat* is the state of realization of the truth in accordance with the stage of spiritual attainment secured by Godly personalities. This stage of realization and its various degrees depend on the degree of submission to the will of God. The more submissive one is, the higher and greater will be the stage of his realization.

Submission implies sacrifice. It means to give up a limited interest for a higher and greater attainment. It means an effort to give up all that is loved by one, in order to comply with His will:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

“Never shall ye attain to righteousness until ye give away (in the way of your Lord) of what ye love; and of whatsoever ye give, verily, God knoweth it.” (3:92)

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا

“And (while needing it for themselves) they give away food, out of love for Him, to the poor and the orphan and the captive (saying); ‘we feed you only for God’s sake, we intend not of you any recompense; nor (even) thanks (thereof).’ (76:8)

It means an effort to purify one's ego-centre, from all that is ungodly so that his ego should become the ground for the manifestation of the divine will and divine attributes. His ego-centre should witness everything in God and God in everything. As the king of all the witnesses, Al-Husayn says, in one of his prayers:

“Oh my Lord: Thou has introduced Thyself to everything; so, there is nothing which does not know Thee, but Thou hast introduced Thyself to me in everything, so I recognize Thee in everything.’

After a few sentences wherein he describes the various stages of his realization, Al-Husayn says;

مَا نَا وَجَدَ مَنْ فَقَدَكَ رُمَا الَّذِي فَقَدَ مَنْ وَجَدَكَ

“Oh my Lord, what has gained the one who had missed Thee and what has missed the one who has gained Thee”.¹

It means that the one who has Him and is in constant communion with Him is having everything with Him: and the one who has everything but is not in communion with Him, he has nothing.

This state of realization depends on the purity of ego-centre, whether he is in this world or the world hereafter, whether he is a child or a grown up, whether he kills or is killed. He is always in the state of '*shahadat*' and in all circumstances he is '*shaheed*'. Ibrahim, by proving his readiness to sacrifice Ismail, and Ismail by his readiness to be sacrificed in the hands of his father, prove that both were in a high state of submission, realization and witnessing.

The Holy Prophet, as the first and the last in the degree of submission to the will of God, is the witness of all witnesses. His ego-centre being purified from all sorts of impurities, be it spiritual or physical, is the seat of the manifestation of the divine will which implies all truth and justice. Next to him are those holy souls who have been termed in the Qur'an as *Ahl Al-Bayt* and the prophet declared them to be identical with him, and they are in constant touch with the Qur'an in its hidden form which is with God.

All these holy personalities were '*shaheed*', witness ever since their birth and continue to be *shaheed* here and the life hereafter. But of all these holy persons, Al-Husayn, in the course of his leadership was entrusted by God to give a new interpretation to the terms witness, sacrifice and intercession by a readiness, ever since his birth, to give all that is nearest and dearest to him in the name of Allah and in absolute submission to His will.

Al-Husayn and those who were with him did not become *shaheed* after being killed in the battlefield of Karbala, but they and the ladies – headed by Al-Husayn's sister, Zainab – all were *shaheed* in the sense that they have been in complete realization of all the sufferings and sacrifices that were awaiting them.

Many a time Al-Husayn used to declare, "God has willed that I would be killed, and my sisters, wives and daughters be taken as captives: we are pleased with whatever pleases God. Whatever pleases Him, pleases us; and in this sacrifice of our dearest and nearest lays the ultimate salvation of mankind."

The prophet Nuh made his ark to save a few at the destruction of others, Al-Husayn preferred destruction of his ark of life and of the chosen few – who were dearest and nearest to him – in order to save the whole mankind from the final destruction. Being in the highest stage of realization, Al-Husayn and his companions, male and female, young and old, welcomed all the heart-rending, immeasurable sufferings.

The true sense of *shahadat* as manifested by Al-Husayn proves that not only those who took active part in those sufferings had attained the stage of *shahadat* but even those who die in the love of this holy house, or those whose heart will be moved by witnessing or hearing the scenes of martyrdom of Al-Husayn and his companions and those who commemorate it by shedding a few tears will secure the stage of *shahadat* and enjoy the ultimate salvation and secure salvation for others too.

And this is called the right of intercession, which the Qur'an gives to those who are the real witness of the truth:

وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

“Of those whom people invoke, besides God, none possesses the right of intercession, save those who have stood as witness to the truth as they have realized it.” (43:86)

Here is an extract from the sermon delivered by Al-Husayn when he was leaving Mecca for Iraq:

“All praise is God's; His will is final; there is no power or might but His and by Him. His grace and blessings and peace be on His Holy Prophet. Death for the children of Adam is nothing but like an ornament round the neck of a bride. My love and longings to join the company of my predecessors is as vehement as the love and longings of Ya'qub to meet his son Yusuf.

A place has been chosen (by God) for my martyrdom, towards which I am proceeding. I am seeing my body cut into pieces by the wolves of the desert at the place between Navawees and Karbala. There is no escape from what is decreed by the 'divine pen.' We, the members of the holy house, are pleased with whatever pleases God. His pleasure is ours. We tolerate His ordeals, and He pays us in full the rewards awaiting the forebearers. Nothing detaches us from the Holy Prophet. Our attachment to him is so great that it places us with him in the sublime and highest stage of life hereafter and God will make him (the Holy Prophet) rejoice our being with him and God shall fulfil His promise with us. Whosoever is ready to lay down his life for us in order to come in communion with God, let him accompany us. I am proceeding next morning.”

These few words will prove undoubtedly how clear was the scene of Karbala before Al-Husayn and his companions and how he desired to acquaint his companions with the aim and object of his movement, which was a covenant with God undertaken by him since his birth. Not only Al-Husayn was witnessing the trials and sufferings awaiting him, even his sister Zainab was also fully acquainted with the tragedy which they had to bear in order to save Islam from being ruined.

She told her nephew Ali Ibn Al-Husayn, “After the martyrdom of Al-Husayn, the enemy thought that by their ruthless and inhuman action they would succeed in destroying our cause but as have been told by my father Ali ('a) and grandfather the Holy Prophet, the tragedy will result in nothing but the destruction of the enemy and the revival of our cause. This place where Al-Husayn's body is left unburied will become the everlasting centre of attraction for the faithful to visit and pay their homage to the great sacrifice (*Dhabh al-Adheem*) offered to God by the house or the Holy Prophet”.

And a great thinker had paid his homage with these words, “If others have the honour of being martyred, martyrdom is honoured by having Al-Husayn martyred”.

[1.](#) Bihar Al-Anwar, vol. 98, p. 220.

Appendix 8 – Al-Yawm

اليَوْم

Note: *This is the eighth of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.*

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“... *This day have I perfected for you, your religion, and have completed My favour on you, and chosen for you Islam (to be) the religion...*” (5:3)

From the context, it is obvious that the 'day' referred to here is not the ordinary day of twenty-four hours known to us. It is the 'day' wherein God has approved Islam as a '*deen*' for us and according to other passages of the Qur'an the only '*deen*' approved by God from eternity to eternity is Islam, to which every heavenly and terrestrial beings has willingly or unwillingly submitted.

No religion other than Islam is acceptable to Allah. And emphatically enough, the person “Muhammad” was commissioned with this universal grace. And Ali was made identical in degree of perfection, so he was ordained as Muhammad's vicegerent. The result is that the day referred to here is the day or rather the stage wherein the creation begins with Muhammad and Ali. The perfection of *deen*, and bounty of God and approval of Islam for all worlds coincide with the creation of the two identical entities, Muhammad and Ali.

Thus, the 'day' obviously transcends all our concepts of space and time and refers to the highest stage of ascension or *mi'raj* (معراج) as pointed out by the sixth imam Ja'afar as-Sadiq, a stage which is identical with the starting point of descension. And the day of *Ghadeer* has been honoured as one of the manifestations of 'this day'. Whenever the Holy Prophet announced his prophethood, he declared Ali's vicegerency, as both are identical with each other at every stage.

Moreover, one should know that the phrase '*al-Yaum*' used before the sentence '***This day, have I perfected your religion***' in the verse 3 above and in the latter verse, '***This day, have been made lawful for you,***' is a sequence to 'Sublime Day'.

There are various manifestations of the perfection of *deen* (religion) as such it is not out of place when the perfection of *Deen* is declared with all its aspects the Satan and his followers (infidels) give up hope.

All the clean things (*Tayyibat* – طَيِّبَات) have been declared lawful for the believers and the unclean things unlawful.

There is another point which needs our attention. It is that the verse 5:3 begins with the declaration of the unlawful food but after the middle of this verse, ***'This day, are despaired those who disbelieve'*** and ***'this day, have I perfected your religion'***, the clause ***'but those whosoever is helplessly forced by hunger (and) not inclined to sin'*** implies that unlawful food should be avoided except in the case of complete absence of lawful food (*Tayyibat*). The structure of the verse draws the attention of the reader that he is permitted to obey the unlawful authority to the minimum extent as the case of unlawful food where and when circumstances compel him.

To eat a dead body and obey the order of an unlawful authority are permissible when the lawful is not available. This passage refers to the perfection of *deen* by God. Verse 67 of the same chapter says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

“(O’ Our apostle Muhammad!) Deliver thou what hath been sent down unto thee from thy Lord; and if thou dost it not, then (it will be as if) thou hast not delivered His message (at all); and surely will God protect thee from (the mischief) of men; Verily God guideth not an infidel person,”
(5:67)

Under normal circumstances, this verse should have been placed next to the above verse (***'This day are despaired those who disbelieve'*** and ***'this day have I perfected your religion'***) but perfection (*Takmeel*) by God precedes, and next is ‘conveying of the message’ (*Tableegh*) by the Holy Prophet.

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Appendix 9 – The Preposition ‘Ba’

Note: *This is the ninth of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.*

Some Urdu and English translators of the Qur'an have translated the preposition *Ba* (ب) in the verse:

لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

“But God (Himself) heareth Witness, through what He hath sent down unto thee (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad), sent He that down, with His knowledge; and the Angels (too) bear witness: and sufficient is God for a Witness” (4: 166)

To mean 'that' which implies that God bears testimony to 'that' whatever has been revealed to you was the outcome of His knowledge. It means the phrase with His knowledge is the object of His testimony. In other word, God certifies that whatever had been revealed to the Holy Prophet was with His knowledge. Such certification proves nothing – it rather requires itself to be proved, as it is a mere claim.

But if the preposition *Ba* in question means 'through' or 'by', the sentence would mean that God – by the means of what has been revealed with the knowledge to you (Muhammad) – bears testimony to the truth of your (Muhammad's) prophethood. It means the object of testimony is the prophethood and the revelation itself is divine testimony.

The Qur'an as an everlasting miracle and unchallengeable word of God is the divine testimony to prove all that God proclaims regarding Himself and the prophet. The Qur'an has challenged mankind at several places to bring the like of it if they have any doubt about its being a word of God. As such, the Qur'an claims to be the self-evident proof of its divine status.

Therefore, wherever in the Qur'an God is presented as the witness to the truth of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet or other subjects, it refers to the Qur'an itself. To this self-evident status of the Qur'an, Ali ('a) refers briefly in *Nahj ul-Balagha* “Surely God has manifested to his creatures in 'His Book” (with angelic force).

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Appendix 10: The Historical Chart Of The 14 Ma'sumeen

The Historical Chart Of 'Bayt al-Risalat' – Fourteen Ma'sumeen – Holy Prophet – His Daughter Fatimah – Twelve Imams

Vide 'Qur'an' Translation By Molvi Mir Ahmad Ali

Note: *This is the tenth and last of a series of articles written by the Author on various occasions that*

have bearing on the topics of the book, and hence they have been included in it as appendices.

	Name	Date of Birth	Age at the time of Martyrdom (yrs)	Designation	Cause of Martyrdom and Burial Place	Assassinated by	Date of Martyrdom
1	Muhammad al-Mustafa	17 th Rabi'ul- awwal, 570 A.D	63	The last apostle of Gid	Effect of poison – Madinah	A Jewess of Khaybar	11 A.H 28 th Safar
2	Fatimah az-Zahra	20 th Jamadis- sani 11 years before Hijrah	18	Daughter of the Apostle of God, Lady of Light, Wife of Ali the 1 st Imam and mother of Imams Hasan and Al-Husayn, Grandmother of nine Imams	Wounded by the fall of the door caused by an outrage at her dwelling – Madina		11 A.H 3 rd Jamadi-sani
3	Ali al-Murtadha	13 th Rajab (600 A.D) 24 years before Hijrah 30 Aamul-Feel	63	The 1 st Imam	Sword – Najaf	Abdur Rahman Ibn Muljam	40 A.H. 21 st Ramadhan
4	Hasan al-Mujtaba	15 th Ramadhan, 3 A.H	47	The 2 nd Imam	Poison – Madina	Jo'da bint Ashas at the instance of Mu'awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan	28 th Safar 49 AH
5	Al-Husayn Sayyidush-shuhada	3 rd Ha'aban 4 AH	57	The 3 rd Imam	Sword – Karbala	Shimr, on the order of Yazid Ibn Mu'awiyah	10 th Muharram 61 AH
6	Ali Zainul Abideen	15 th Jamdil Awwal, 38 AH	58	The 4 th Imam	Poison- Madina	Walid Ibn Abdul Malik	25 th Muharram 95 AH

	Name	Date of Birth	Age at the time of Martyrdom (yrs)	Designation	Cause of Martyrdom and Burial Place	Assassinated by	Date of Martyrdom
7	Muhammad al-Baqeer	1 st Rajab 57 AH	57	The 5 th Imam	Poison – Madina	Hisham Ibn Abdul Malik	7 th Zulhijjah 114 AH
8	Jaafar as-Sadiq	17 th Rabiul-awwal	65	The 6 th Imam	Poison – Madina	Al-Mansur	15 th Rajab 145 AH
9	Musa al-Kazim	7 th Safar, 125 AH	55	The 7 th Imam	Poison – Kazimain	Harun ar-Rashid	25 th Rajab 183 Ah
10	Ali ar-Ridha	11 th Zulqi'da 148 AH	55	The 8 th Imam	Poison – Mashad, Iran	Ma'mun ar-Rashid	17 th Safar 202 AH
11	Muhammad at-Taqi	7 th Rajab 195 AH	25	The 9 th Imam	Poison – Kazimain		10 th Zulqi'dah 220 AH
12	Ali an-Naqi	2 nd Rajab 213 AH	42	The 10 th Imam	Poison – Samarra	He was poisoned by Mu'tamad by the order of his elder brother Mu'taz; the causes of murder traced back to their father Mutawakkil who bred hatred for Ahl Al-Bayt among his sons.	3 rd Rajab 254 AH
13	Hasan al-Askari	10 th Rabi'uuth-thani 232 AH	28	The 11 th Imam	Poison – Samarra	Mu'tamad	8 th Rabi'ul Awwal, 260 AH

	Name	Date of Birth	Age at the time of Martyrdom (yrs)	Designation	Cause of Martyrdom and Burial Place	Assassinated by	Date of Martyrdom
14		15 th Sha'ban 256 AH		The 12 th Imam	Disappeared in the cave in Samarra. To reappear before resurrection day	Alive at the will of Allah. Interviews <i>incognito</i> with anyone who seeks his personal guidance with purity of heart	

[1] [1]

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